

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2108

As of April 9, 2019

Title: An act relating to state funding for K-3 class sizes in schools.

Brief Description: Concerning state funding for K-3 class sizes in schools.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Callan, Stonier, Harris, Dolan, Sullivan, Valdez, Thai, Jenkin and Morgan).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/05/19, 91-7.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/22/19, 3/27/19 [DP-WM, DNP].
Ways & Means: 4/08/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Delays the requirement that school districts meet kindergarten through third grade class-size ratios of 17 students to one classroom teacher until the 2020-21 school year.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Mullet.

Staff: Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Jeffrey Naas (786-7708)

Background: The state allocates funding for public schools using a prototypical school formula, which calculates the funding necessary to support prototypical elementary, middle, and high schools. As part of the formula, class size ratios are defined by grade to determine

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the number of funded instructional staff allocated to school districts. The actual number of staff in districts can vary from the number of state-allocated staff. Since the 2017-18 school year, class sizes for kindergarten through third grade (K-3) in the prototypical formulas have been funded at 17 students to one classroom teacher for all districts.

Beginning September 1, 2019—the beginning of the 2019-20 school year—districts may receive K-3 class-size funding sufficient to fund 17 students to one classroom teacher, only to the extent of and proportionate to, the district's actual demonstrated class size. After that date, a district with an actual K-3 class size of more than 17 to one would receive funding only up to its actual K-3 class size.

Summary of Bill: The requirement that school districts meet a K-3 class-size ratio of 17 students to one classroom teacher to receive funding at that ratio is delayed one year, until September 1, 2020.

Appropriation: The bill contains a null and void clause requiring specific funding be provided in an omnibus appropriation act.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: School districts understand the value of the 17:1 ratio. However, schools are having a hard time finding teachers and acquiring the actual physical space to do this. One district recently passed a half billion dollar bond and is buying land and building schools as quickly as possible. In the meantime they would like to hire the teachers and move them into new classrooms when those classrooms are ready. Pasco has had tremendous growth over the past decade, and is still growing at 350 students a year with one third of those students served in over 200 portables. Pasco cannot add classrooms fast enough to achieve the 17:1 ratio. Extending the delay to 2020 would help a lot of districts, but extending it further to 2024 would be even better.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Representative Lisa Callan, Prime Sponsor; Jaime Morales, Barbara McClintock STEM Elementary.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: Tri-cities has experienced tremendous growth over the last ten years and all three school districts are building new schools. Despite all of the building, these districts simply have not been able, meet the 17:1 ratio even when including P.E. teachers and art teachers and others and adding portable classroom space. For high growth districts it's going to take some time to reach the 17:1 ratio.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Marie Sullivan, Pasco School District, Richland School District.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): No one.