

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2816

As of February 27, 2020

Title: An act relating to nurturing positive social and emotional school and classroom climates.

Brief Description: Nurturing positive social and emotional school and classroom climates.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Corry, Steele, Caldier, Van Werven, Eslick, Chambers and Boehnke).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/18/20, 95-2.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/26/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Washington State School Directors' Association to develop and update a model policy and procedure for nurturing a positive social and emotional school and classroom climate by March 1, 2021.
- Requires school districts to adopt a policy and procedure consistent with the model by the beginning of the 2021-22 school year.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Social-Emotional Learning Benchmarks and Developmental Indicators. In 2015, a budget proviso directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to convene a work group to recommend comprehensive benchmarks for developmentally appropriate interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of social-emotional learning (SEL) for grades K-12.

In 2017, a budget proviso directed OSPI to continue this work group to identify and articulate grade-level developmental indicators for each of the SEL benchmarks, solicit feedback, and develop best practices or guidance.

SEL Committee. In 2019, a permanent SEL Committee was established to promote and expand SEL. The SEL Committee has a number of duties including developing and

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implementing a statewide framework for SEL that is trauma-informed, culturally sustaining, and developmentally appropriate.

Teacher and Principal Evaluations. Classroom teacher and principal evaluations are based on specified statutory criteria. One of the criteria for teacher evaluations is fostering and managing a safe, positive learning environment. One of the criteria for principal evaluations is creating a school culture that promotes the ongoing improvement of learning and teaching for students and staff, and another is providing for school safety.

Summary of Bill: WSSDA must develop a model policy and procedure for nurturing a positive social and emotional school and classroom climate. The goal of the model is to support and promote action plans that create, maintain, and nurture physically, emotionally, and intellectually safe, respectful, and positive school and classroom environments that foster equitable, ethical, social, emotional, and academic education for all students. The model must:

- align with the work of the SEL Committee and SEL standards and benchmarks;
- recognize that there is not one best way to address this topic and consider each school's history, strengths, needs, and goals;
- define and describe the essential elements of a positive social and emotional school and classroom climate;
- recognize the important role of families; and
- describe a framework for an improvement process.

In developing the model, WSSDA must:

- consult with OSPI and organizations with expertise in social and emotional health and in equity, race, and inclusive learning environments;
- work with the SEL Committee to align the improvement framework with SEL;
- consider the relationship between the model policies and procedures related to student behaviors and student discipline; and
- review research and examples of restorative practices, collaborative and proactive practices, trauma-sensitive and trauma-informed practices, classroom management, and other topics.

The model must be posted publicly on WSSDA's website by March 1, 2021. WSSDA must update the model periodically to align with the work of the SEL Committee, and updates must be posted within a reasonable time.

By the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, school districts must adopt a policy and procedure for promoting a positive school and classroom climate consistent with the WSSDA model. School districts must periodically review for consistency with updated versions of the model.

Appropriation: None.

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: PRO: Many students drop out of school because of things happening at school not at home. This bill will address systemic issues and help shift the paradigm. A model policy from the state will help schools improve and not marginalize or label children.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Katrina Bretsch, People for People/Educator/Coordinator for Open Doors YVCC; Gabrielle Gilbert, parent.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.