

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1960

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to increasing prototypical school staffing to better meet student needs.

Brief Description: Increasing prototypical school staffing to better meet student needs.

Sponsors: Representatives Stonier, Santos, Pollet, Doglio, Hackney, Callan, Riccelli, Berg, Street, Farivar, Rule, Shavers, Reeves, Ortiz-Self, Harris, Reed, Ryu, Leavitt, Berry, Duerr, Senn, Ramel, Slatter, Morgan, Fey, Timmons, Fosse, Goodman, Thai, Alvarado, Lekanoff and Davis.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 2/3/24, 2/5/24 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Increases staff allocations for teaching assistants, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees, by 0.1 full-time equivalent(s) per school in the prototypical school funding model.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 20 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, Vice Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Berg, Callan, Chopp, Davis, Fitzgibbon, Harris, Lekanoff, Pollet, Riccelli, Ryu, Senn, Simmons, Slatter, Springer, Stonier and Tharinger.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Corry, Ranking Minority Member; Chambers, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Couture, Assistant Ranking Minority

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Member; Dye, Rude, Sandlin, Schmick, Stokesbary and Wilcox.

Staff: James Mackison (786-7104).

Background:

Prototypical School Funding Model Allocations.

The prototypical school funding model allocates general apportionment funding to school districts based on assumed levels of staff and other resources necessary to support "prototypical" elementary, middle, and high schools. These prototypical schools are assumed to have the following full-time student enrollments: 400 students for elementary school, 432 students for middle school, and 600 students for high school. In addition to other allocations, for each prototypical school, the model includes the minimum allocations for teaching assistance:

	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching assistance, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees	0.936	0.700	0.652

Discretionary Spending of Allocations.

Subject to some limits, the funding provided to school districts through the prototypical school funding model is for allocation purposes only. This means that school districts have discretion over spending decisions and can, for example, use funding allocated for aides to hire teachers, to purchase technology, or on other costs. However, there are exceptions to this discretionary spending allowance, including that funding for average kindergarten through grade 3 (K-3) class sizes may be provided only to the extent of and proportionate to the school districts' demonstrated actual class size in grades K-3, up to the funded class sizes.

Additional Allocations Specified for School Staff.

In addition to the staffing units funded through the prototypical school funding model, certain additional staffing units are specified in statute. These additional staffing units are not allocated until they are specifically appropriated and designated for those staff in the omnibus operating appropriations act. These are additional units specified for the following types of staff:

	Elementary	Middle	High
Teaching assistance, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees	1.0640	0.3000	0.3480

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The minimum allocations in the prototypical school funding model for teaching assistance, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees, are increased by 0.1 full-time equivalent (FTE) per prototypical school in the state's prototypical funding model beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

The additional allocations specified in statute beyond the prototypical formula for teaching assistance are reduced for 0.1 FTE per prototypical school.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute replaces the phased-in increases to prototypical school staffing ratios for teaching assistance, office support staff, and noninstructional aides in the underlying bill with an increase of 0.1 FTE per prototypical school for teaching assistance, including any aspect of educational instructional services provided by classified employees, beginning in the 2024-25 school year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 2024.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect on September 1, 2024. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This policy provides funding through state formulas to help the staff most in need of increased wages and support. Even though this is a supplemental year, some support is needed. Paraeducators and office workers in schools play a vital role in supporting and interacting with students. The bill would bring funding for these job types up to the levels envisioned by the Quality Education Council, the Staffing Enrichment Workgroup, and Initiative 1351. The state should be committed to fully funding education. The lack of state funding for these roles is causing budget crises for school districts. Funding shortfalls are requiring school districts to have an overreliance on local levies for these positions. The current funding model does not provide the needed staffing for basic education and social-emotional learning. These employees need a living wage. Though this does not go far enough, the incremental increases are good. School districts employ more paraeducators than the state provides. This bill would fund only a small portion of paraeducators, but it is a good beginning to an overhaul of school funding.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Monica Jurado Stonier, prime sponsor; Julie Salvi, Washington Education Association; Tyler Muench, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Marissa Rathbone, Washington State School Directors' Association; Rick Chisa, Public School Employees of Washington and Service Employees International Union 1948; Nancy Katims, Edmonds School District; and Malorie Larson, Washington State Parent Teacher Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.