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HOUSE BILL 3041

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

**By** Representatives Roach, Williams, McCune, Hurst, Ahern, Darneille, Kenney, Roberts, Simpson, Kretz, Haler, Ormsby, Jarrett, and Morrell

Read first time 01/21/08. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & Children's Services.

1 AN ACT Relating to learning disabilities screening, identification,  
2 and diagnosis; adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; and  
3 creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** In 2005, the legislature created the caring  
6 for Washington individuals with autism task force. The task force was  
7 directed to study and make recommendations to the legislature regarding  
8 the growing incidence of autism and ways to improve the delivery and  
9 coordination of autism services in the state. One of the essential  
10 first step recommendations made in the final report was to screen all  
11 Washington children before the age of three and establish a minimum of  
12 one trained autism technical assistance specialist in each of the nine  
13 educational service districts in order to provide support to teachers  
14 and staff.

15 The legislature recognizes that there is an urgent need to begin  
16 providing system-wide improvements to help provide services to children  
17 with autism and their parents as well as to all children with learning  
18 disabilities and their teachers. The legislature also recognizes that  
19 the earlier a child can be identified with a disability the more

1 effective the interventions can be. It is therefore the intent of the  
2 legislature to begin the process of building a statewide system of  
3 screening, identification and diagnosis that is available to children  
4 before enrolling in K-12 educational system.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) A pilot program for implementing a statewide system of  
8 screening, identification, and diagnosis of learning disabilities  
9 including autism spectrum disorder is established. The program shall  
10 be administered by the participating educational service districts.  
11 Each educational service district shall at a minimum:

12 (a) Provide screening and diagnostic services for children under  
13 the age of three;

14 (b) Engage in community outreach activities to inform parents of  
15 the availability and value of early diagnosis and intervention;

16 (c) Coordinate and work in partnership with currently available  
17 services and service providers; and

18 (d) Work in conjunction with and provide technical assistance to  
19 public schools, day care programs, and community agencies in the  
20 region.

21 (2) In establishing this program, the legislature shall start with  
22 two pilot programs in two separate educational service districts. One  
23 pilot shall be in eastern Washington and one shall be in western  
24 Washington.

25 (a) One of the pilot sites shall be an educational service district  
26 with an exemplary special education cooperative that has a history of  
27 coordinated community involvement and is already providing services  
28 such as those listed in subsection (1)(a) of this section for children  
29 with autism and other learning disabilities.

30 (b) In addition to the requirements of subsection (1) of this  
31 section, the pilot educational service district established under  
32 subsection (2)(a) of this section shall also provide technical  
33 assistance to the second pilot site in developing its program.

34 (3) The two pilot sites shall work together to submit a single  
35 report to the legislature by December 2010, on how to best expand the  
36 program to all nine educational service districts, including the

1 staffing levels needed to provide adequate services and any recommended  
2 changes to the program requirements.

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