
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6388

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Rasmussen, Roach, McAuliffe, King, Kauffman, Hobbs, Benton, Zarelli, Oemig, Stevens, Kohl-Welles, Kilmer, Sheldon, and Carrell)

READ FIRST TIME 02/12/08.

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 establish a
11 minimum of one trained autism technical assistance specialist in each
12 of the nine educational service districts in order to provide support
13 to teachers and staff.

14 The legislature recognizes that lack of teachers and mentors
15 trained in autism strategies in the school district creates great
16 difficulty in implementing autism programs and strategies. There is an
17 urgent need to begin providing system-wide improvements to help provide
18 services to children with autism and their parents as well as to all
19 children with learning disabilities and their teachers. Hiring outside

1 consultants with expertise is costly to school districts as are the
2 consequences of actions brought by parents against the districts
3 because they are seeking appropriate services. Creating a position
4 with a built-in partnership and a liaison with birth-to-three services
5 and throughout the lifespan helps to establish common goals and
6 objectives. It is therefore the intent of the legislature to begin the
7 process of building a statewide position of an autism spectrum disorder
8 specialist within each educational service district region to provide
9 meaningful collaboration at the local level of school districts with
10 state agencies that is recognized as supportive of both professionals
11 and families.

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

14 (1) A pilot program for implementing a statewide position of an
15 autism spectrum disorder specialist within each educational service
16 district is established. The program shall be administered by the
17 participating educational service districts. The autism spectrum
18 disorder specialist in each educational service district shall at a
19 minimum:

20 (a) Provide ongoing leadership, expertise, training, and
21 consultative services to school districts, birth-to-three agencies,
22 early intervention agencies, and other identified entities that support
23 or necessitate the use, identification, and implementation of research-
24 based practices;

25 (b) Develop infrastructure to facilitate increasing school
26 districts, birth-to-three agencies, early intervention agencies, and
27 other identified entities the capacity to serve children ages birth to
28 twenty-one years with autism and other related disorders;

29 (c) Collaborate with the autism outreach project to identify
30 statewide training needs and current gaps, and develop training modules
31 to address identified gaps and present trainings within each
32 educational service district, including ongoing collaboration with the
33 University of Washington, the infant and early childhood conference,
34 and other training providers to avoid duplication of offerings;

35 (d) Participate in local efforts to gather demographic data
36 regarding children with autism. Report data gathered to the autism

1 task force identification/tracking subcommittee and the office of the
2 superintendent of public instruction autism outreach project;

3 (e) Continue to remain current in autism strategies, causation,
4 incidence and prevalence, curricula, methodologies, legal references,
5 and implications surrounding educational service and supports for
6 students with autism and other related disorders; and

7 (f) Conform to the principles, values, and mission of each
8 educational service district.

9 (2) In establishing this program, the legislature shall start with
10 two pilot programs in two separate educational service districts. One
11 pilot shall be in eastern Washington and one shall be in western
12 Washington.

13 (a) One of the pilot sites shall be an educational service district
14 with a special education cooperative that has a history of coordinated
15 community involvement and is already providing services for children
16 with autism and other learning disabilities similar to the autism
17 education coordinator in educational service district 105 who provides
18 training to educators on autism spectrum disorders and education
19 strategies; provides consultation to school districts on specific
20 students; serves as a liaison to a birth-to-three agency and school
21 districts; and provides other services as requested.

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

26 (3) The two pilot sites shall work together to submit a single
27 report to the legislature by December 2010, on how to best expand the
28 program to all nine educational service districts, including the
29 staffing levels needed to provide adequate services and any recommended
30 changes to the program requirements.

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