

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1969

As Reported by House Committee On: Education Appropriations

Title: An act relating to promoting predictable funding for school districts that provide residential education.

Brief Description: Promoting predictable funding for school districts that provide residential education.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Appleton, Kagi, Seaquist, Hurst, O'Brien, Morrell, Green, Dickerson and Sullivan.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education Appropriations: 2/18/09, 2/26/09 [DPS]; 1/19/10, 1/21/10 [DP2S].

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires that allocations to school districts for institutional education programs at state juvenile rehabilitation centers and county juvenile detention facilities be not less than the funding levels to support 90 percent of the prior school year's enrollment, beginning in the 2010-11 school year.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Probst, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Hope, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Carlyle, Haler, Hunter, Kagi, Nealey, Quall, Rolfes and Wallace.

Staff: Ben Rarick (786-7349).

Background:

The state funds a 220-day educational program for children in certain institutions. Institutional education funding is allocated to local school districts, educational service

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districts, or other entities that provide the educational program. The five types of institutions receiving institutional education program funding are:

1. residential habilitation centers, which provide 24-hour-a-day care of children with disabilities. The disabilities range from profoundly mentally retarded, physically impaired, or severe behavior disorders. There are three centers maintained by the Division of Developmental Disabilities and the Division of Mental Health of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS);
2. state group homes, which provide 24-hour-a-day services for adjudicated youth. There are six group homes maintained by the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration of the DSHS;
3. institutions for juvenile delinquents, which provide 24-hour-a-day diagnosis, confinement, and rehabilitation of juveniles committed by the courts. There are five institutions maintained by the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration of the DSHS;
4. county detention centers, which provide 24-hour-a-day treatment and care for juveniles who have been placed under protective custody or have committed a criminal offense. There are 21 centers maintained by county governments; and
5. state corrections facilities, which provide 24-hour-a-day incarceration of adults and juveniles committed as adults. Institutional education funding is provided for the education of juveniles under 18 years of age. There is one correctional facility operated by the Department of Corrections that houses juvenile inmates.

State funding for each type of institution is provided based on a formula similar to the basic education funding formula. Each full-time equivalent (FTE) student generates staff units, which in turn generate dollars for salaries, benefits, and other costs of the program. Institutional education allocations are based on annual average FTE student enrollment, which reflect the average of student counts taken once per month throughout the year.

During the 2007-08 school year, there were approximately 1,573 FTE students served through institutional educational programs. The average per student allocation was approximately \$11,943. The 2007-09 budget included approximately \$38.9 million for institutional education funding.

Summary of Second Substitute Bill:

Beginning with the 2010-11 school year, school districts or Educational Service Districts that provide instruction at state juvenile rehabilitation services and county juvenile detention facilities shall receive allocations for institutional education that are not less than 90 percent of the prior year's enrollments.

Second Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The second substitute bill specifies that the 90 percent floor applies only to residential education allocations based on enrollments at state juvenile rehabilitation facilities and county juvenile detention facilities. The second substitute bill also clarifies that the 90 percent funding floor is calculated based on 90 percent of prior year enrollments, rather than 90 percent of prior year allocations. The second substitute also specifies that the 90 percent floor shall take effective beginning in the 2010-11 school year, rather than the 2009-10 school year.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Second Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The bill will allow for more stable funding. Although student FTE counts in these settings are relatively low, headcounts can be substantially higher. Last year there were over 11,000 unduplicated headcount students educated in the system for some period of time. Juvenile facilities often have very rapid turnover. Stability in funding will enable programs to staff and plan more effectively. Many of these children are special needs children, and more stable staffing can help meet the need for proper evaluation and services.

(Opposed) None

Persons Testifying: Representative Haigh, prime sponsor; Kathleen Sande, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Christie Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None