

HOUSE BILL REPORT

2SSB 5687

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to the instruction in Braille reading and writing to blind students.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to instruction in Braille.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Long, Rasmussen, Johnson, Bauer, Kohl, Finkbeiner, Fairley, C. Anderson, Hochstatter, Gaspard, Pelz, Prince and Winsley).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/15/96, 2/23/96 [DP].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Brumsickle, Chairman; Elliot, Vice Chairman; Johnson, Vice Chairman; Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Clements; Fuhrman; Hatfield; Linville; McMahan; Pelesky; Quall; Radcliff; Smith; Talcott; B. Thomas and Veloria.

Staff: Cheri Keller (786-7093).

Background: The federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (originally enacted in 1975 as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act) requires that states accepting federal funds provide a free and appropriate public education for all children with disabilities in the least restrictive environment. The federal law requires that related services be provided if the services are needed to help a child with a disability benefit from special education. Children with disabilities in Washington must have the opportunity for an appropriate education under state law, federal law, and the Washington State Constitution.

An individual education program (IEP) must be developed for all special education students. Instruction in Braille is provided only for visually impaired or blind students if such instruction is required in the student's IEP.

Summary of Bill: It is a stated goal that students who are legally blind or visually impaired be given the opportunity to learn Braille to communicate effectively and efficiently.

A student who must be assessed to determine if Braille is needed includes a student who