

Education

HB 1378

Brief Description: *Creating the parental and community involvement grant pilot program.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Santos, Cox, Keiser, Quall, McDermott, Talcott, Simpson, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke, Lovick, Wood, O'Brien, Kenney, Conway and Jackley.*

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Establishes a pilot grant program to promote parent and community involvement in schools.*

Hearing Date: *2/5/01*

Staff: *Sydney Forrester (786-7120).*

Background:

In 1993, the Legislature declared that improving student achievement will require parents to be primary partners in the education of their children, and to play a significantly greater role in decision making at the local school level. In 1997, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) coordinated the current Unity Project based on a finding that the level of family and community involvement is a strong predictor of student success or failure. The Unity Project serves 28 schools in seven representative districts and is aimed at uniting families, schools, and communities toward success for all students, particularly historically underachieving students. In January 2001, the Washington Association of Principals reported to the House Education Committee that communication and partnerships with parents and community members was one of seven critical factors for promoting student learning in performance-based schools.

Summary of Bill:

A two-year pilot grant program is established to help parents, schools, and communities form partnerships to improve student learning and to strengthen the role of parents and the community in the educational process.

One hundred schools or districts are eligible to receive a maximum grant of eight thousand dollars per school year, and a total of sixteen thousand dollars over the grant period. Schools and districts are encouraged, but not required, to provide a local funding match of thirty percent. The match may be in the form of in-kind contributions from the school or district, or from private sources.

The schools or districts selected must represent a balance of characteristics, including, geographic location, student demographics, urban and rural locations, and district or school size. Priority will be given to elementary schools. Grants are limited to those schools and districts that do not have a paid coordinator for parent and community involvement or an existing program to coordinate parent and community involvement.

The OSPI will administer the program with assistance from an advisory committee. The advisory committee may include representatives of parents, and educational and community organizations. The application process will be simple, with the only requirement being a statement of commitment from parents, community members, and school and district representatives. Reporting requirements for participants will be as minimal as practicable.

By September 2003, the OSPI will report to the Governor and the senate and house education committees on recommendations for the expansion, continuation, modification, or elimination of the program. The legislation expires June 30, 2004.

Effective Date: *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *Requested on January 30, 2001.*