
HOUSE BILL 1543

State of Washington

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By Representatives Fraser, Belcher, Winsley, Leonard, Beck, Hine, Ebersole, Brekke, Jones, Pruitt, Holland, Jacobsen and Heavey.

Read first time January 31, 1991. Referred to Committees on Human Services\Appropriations.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishment of a family support worker program
2 in schools; adding a new chapter to Title 74 RCW; creating a new
3 section; and making an appropriation.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature finds that children
6 and their families frequently are not linked with support services
7 available in the community until a problem reaches a crisis level.
8 Many educators, in an attempt to provide support to children at risk,
9 are devoting valuable instruction time to assisting with their social
10 service needs.

11 (2) The legislature further finds that public schools can serve as
12 an effective site for the identification and assessment of at-risk
13 factors and for referrals of students to appropriate community support
14 services before the child's situation reaches a crisis level.

1 (3) The legislature further finds that schools should foster
2 increased involvement between the family, the community, and the school
3 by promoting activities that encourage parents and community members to
4 participate in school activities.

5 (4) The legislature further finds that several existing school-
6 based family support worker projects have successfully provided
7 students and families with access to community social services, thereby
8 reducing the need to spend instructional time providing social services
9 to students, increasing parental involvement in their child's
10 education, and improving the educational achievement of at-risk
11 students.

12 (5) The purpose of this chapter is to help at-risk children and
13 their families gain access to social services, improve the academic
14 achievement of children at risk, increase parental and community
15 involvement in schools, and to reduce the amount of instruction time
16 devoted to the social service needs of children through the
17 establishment of family support worker projects in selected public
18 schools throughout the state.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The terms defined in this section shall
20 have the meanings indicated when used in this chapter.

21 (1) "Department" means the department of social and health
22 services.

23 (2) "Secretary" means the secretary of the department of social
24 and health services.

25 (3) "Low-income student" means a student who meets the family-
26 income criteria for a free or reduced-price lunch according to the
27 provisions of 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1751, the national school lunch act, as
28 amended.

1 (4) "Designated school" means the school identified in the grant
2 award as the recipient of a family support worker project.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) There is established in the
4 department a family support worker program that shall fund and
5 coordinate school-based family support worker projects. The projects
6 shall assist with the educational and social service needs of at-risk
7 students and their families.

8 (2) Applications for project funding under this section shall:

9 (a) Identify and describe the designated school and include
10 documentation of the number of low-income students attending the
11 designated school.

12 (b) Demonstrate the active participation of public and private
13 entities in the development of the family support project including,
14 but not limited to:

15 (i) The administrator of and instructors at, the designated school;

16 (ii) Youth services organizations;

17 (iii) Health care providers;

18 (iv) Law enforcement representatives;

19 (v) Employment services providers; and

20 (vi) Community members.

21 (c) Describe the job responsibilities of the student and family
22 support worker, including but not limited to assessment of at-risk
23 children, referrals to community social service providers, home
24 visitation, casework management, parental involvement activities,
25 community involvement activities, and academic achievement enhancement
26 activities.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The secretary shall award grants for
28 family support worker projects. The secretary shall award the grants

1 on a competitive basis based upon information provided in applications
2 for funding. To the greatest extent possible, grants shall be
3 geographically distributed throughout the state.

4 (2) Grants awarded under this section to the greatest extent
5 possible shall be equally distributed among elementary schools, middle
6 schools, and secondary schools. A minimum of eighty percent of the
7 grants shall be awarded to schools with a low-income student enrollment
8 of at least thirty percent.

9 (3) Family support worker projects funded under this chapter shall
10 include, at a minimum, one full-time equivalent family support worker
11 per designated school. Schools with an enrollment of less than two
12 hundred students may share a family support worker with another school
13 with an enrollment of less than two hundred students.

14 (4) The secretary shall give preference to those applications that
15 will provide family support workers through contracts with private or
16 public social services entities in the community.

17 (5) Twenty-five percent of the funding for projects under this
18 chapter shall be community matching funds provided by private or public
19 entities, including the selected school districts. Contributions of
20 materials, equipment, or supplies may be considered as all or part of
21 the funding provided by the community.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The department shall, to the extent
23 practical, assist with the development of additional family support
24 projects by rotating or loaning department employees to schools to
25 serve as family support workers.

26 (2) The department shall report to the legislature by December 1,
27 1992, on the progress of efforts to provide family support workers for
28 additional schools, as required by this section.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The department shall evaluate the
2 effectiveness of the family support worker projects. The department
3 shall develop standards for measuring the effectiveness of family
4 support worker projects that reflect factors such as academic progress,
5 treatment outcomes, and the enhancement of parental and community
6 involvement.

7 The department shall report the results of the evaluation to the
8 legislature by December 31 of each odd-numbered year.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 5 of this act shall
10 constitute a new chapter in Title 74 RCW.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The sum of five million dollars, or as
12 much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated from the general fund
13 to the department of social and health services, for the biennium
14 ending June 30, 1993, to carry out the purposes of this act.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** If any provision of this act or its
16 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
17 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
18 persons or circumstances is not affected.