

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2108

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to state funding for K-3 class sizes in schools.

**Brief Description:** Concerning state funding for K-3 class sizes in schools.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Callan, Stonier, Harris, Dolan, Sullivan, Valdez, Thai, Jenkin and Morgan.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Appropriations: 2/26/19, 2/28/19 [DPS].

#### **Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Delays the requirement that school districts meet kindergarten through third grade class-size ratios of 17 students to one classroom teacher until the 2020–21 school year.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Bergquist, 2nd Vice Chair; Robinson, 1st Vice Chair; MacEwen, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Rude, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Cody, Dolan, Fitzgibbon, Hansen, Hoff, Hudgins, Jinkins, Kraft, Macri, Mosbrucker, Pettigrew, Pollet, Ryu, Senn, Springer, Stanford, Steele, Sullivan, Sutherland, Tarleton, Tharinger and Ybarra.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Stokesbary, Ranking Minority Member; Caldier, Dye and Schmick.

**Staff:** James Mackison (786-7104).

#### **Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

The state allocates funding for public schools using a prototypical school formula, which calculates the funding necessary to support "prototypical" elementary, middle, and high schools. As part of the formula, class size ratios are defined by grade to determine the number of funded instructional staff allocated to school districts. The actual number of staff in districts can vary from the number of state-allocated staff. Since the 2017–18 school year, class sizes for kindergarten through third grade (K–3) in the prototypical formulas have been funded at 17 students to one classroom teacher for all districts.

Beginning September 1, 2019 (the beginning of the 2019–20 school year), districts may receive K–3 class-size funding sufficient to fund 17 students to one classroom teacher, only to the extent of, and proportionate to, the district's actual demonstrated class size. After that date, a district with an actual K–3 class size of more than 17 to one would receive funding only up to its actual K–3 class size.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The requirement that school districts meet a K–3 class-size ratio of 17 students to one classroom teacher to receive funding at that ratio is delayed one year, until September 1, 2020.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

A null and void clause was added, making the bill null and void if funding for the bill is not provided in the omnibus appropriations act (operating budget).

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The Pasco School District is an example of why this bill is needed. Pasco has grown significantly, doubling in size since 2000. Since 1999, Pasco has built 12 new schools, including three elementary schools since 2014, with plans to build two more. One-third of its students attend classes in portables. With additional class-size funding, Pasco has lowered kindergarten through grade 1 class sizes to 18.9 to 1. Pasco estimates another 99 classrooms are needed to reach a ratio of 17 to one. This delay would provide a reprieve for districts. Consider extending the delay longer for districts experiencing significant growth.

While smaller K–3 classes are a good thing, many districts do not have the physical capacity to reach a class size of 17. Tying operating budget funding to compliance while only offering one round of capital funding for building additional classes in 2015 makes it difficult for districts. The Arlington School District is only six class rooms short of compliance, but its last three bond votes have failed, despite approval rates of 50 to 55 percent. Arlington will lose funding if the compliance date is not delayed. Delay the implementation by at least one year and identify barriers to district compliance, including lack of capacity and teachers.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Marie Sullivan, Pasco School District; and Andy Jensen, Washington State PTA.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.