

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1329

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Synopsis As Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing special educational services demonstration projects.

By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives H. Sommers, Holland, Locke, Silver, Brekke, Peery, Ebersole, Fuhrman, Cole, Phillips and R. King; by request of Legislative Budget Committee).

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background: The Legislative Budget Committee has reviewed and issued a report regarding students in the learning disabled (LD) category of special education. Specifically, the committee looked at the cost of identifying LD students, means of determining program eligibility, effectiveness of services, and student characteristics. The Legislative Budget Committee concluded that:

- 1) The assessment process for identifying students as LD is expensive and has little diagnostic or programmatic value. The process absorbs resources that could be spent on instruction.
- 2) Programs for LD and other mildly handicapped students provide little information on student outcomes or program effectiveness.
- 3) Many students identified as LD are educationally similar to low-achieving students in other categorical programs.

Summary: The intent of the bill is to encourage school districts to develop innovative special services demonstration projects that use resources efficiently and increase student learning.

Selection Advisory Committee: A Selection Advisory Committee, composed of representatives from the House, Senate, Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), Office of Financial Management, the Washington Special Education Coalition, transitional bilingual instruction educators, and the Washington Education Association, shall:

- a) Develop criteria for selecting demonstration projects;
- b) Issue requests for proposals to the school districts applying for the demonstration projects;
- c) Review the proposals and recommend prospective demonstration projects for approval by SPI; and,
- d) Report annually on the status of the demonstration projects to the Legislative Budget Committee and the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the House and Senate.

Superintendent of Public Instruction: SPI shall:

- a) Make 10-25 awards for demonstration projects in individual school districts and cooperatives and make awards for in-service training;
- b) Provide technical assistance;
- c) Grant waivers;
- d) Contract with participating school districts and make contract payments;
- e) Evaluate the projects or contract for an evaluation after conferring with the Selection Advisory Committee on the evaluation design; and,
- f) Report to the Legislature by December 31, 1993 (interim report) and by December 31, 1995 (final report).

Funding: Project funding may include state, federal, and local funds and is to be specified by the district in its project cost proposal and negotiated in the project contract. SPI shall include all project funding in a project contract and disburse the funds as contract payments.

With respect to state funding, the state handicapped funding, learning assistance program (LAP) funding, and transitional bilingual program funding allocated for the students served in the demonstration projects are included in the project funding.

The state handicapped funding in each school year is based on the average percentage of the kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment in the particular handicapped category during the prior three years, unless the school district participated in the 1989 Pilot Project for the Prevention of Learning Disabilities. Project funding for school districts that participated in the 1989 Pilot Project is based on 4 percent of the kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment considered as specific learning disabled, without regard to the actual number of students so identified. The percentages used for the state handicapped funding to the demonstration projects will be used to adjust basic education allocations and learning assistance program allocations.

LAP allocations and bilingual program allocations are calculated for project districts according to the funding formula in use for other districts.

State funds can be used both for categorical and noncategorical purposes. State handicapped funds up to the level required by federal maintenance of effort rules are required to be expended for services to handicapped students in the project. Allocations greater than the amount needed to comply with federal maintenance of effort rules are designated in whole or in part as noncategorical project funds and may be expended on services to any students served in the project. Allocation increases in the LAP and bilingual funds above the fiscal year 1992 amount are to be designated in whole or in part as noncategorical project funds and may be expended on services to any student served in the project. SPI is required to create new and discrete program or subprogram codes for the expenditures of noncategorical project funds, to be effective by September 1, 1991.

Funding under federal remediation program allocations, federal handicapped funds, and funding from local sources may be designated in whole or in part by a project district for project use if the amounts are justified in the district's cost proposal and included in the contract amount.

Expiration: The provisions of the bill expire January 1, 1996.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	98	0	
Senate	45	1	(Senate amended)
House	95	0	(House concurred)

Effective: May 17, 1991