

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5235

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, MARCH 5, 1991

Brief Description: Creating the fair start program.

SPONSORS: Senators Bailey, Rinehart, Oke, Patterson, Anderson, Pelz, Johnson, Murray, A. Smith, Sutherland, Conner and Talmadge.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5235 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chairman; Erwin, Vice Chairman; Anderson, Metcalf, Murray, Pelz, Rinehart, and Talmadge.

Staff: Larry Davis (786-7422)

Hearing Dates: January 22, 1991; January 31, 1991

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Second Substitute Senate Bill No. 5235 be substituted therefor, and the second substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McDonald, Chairman; Bailey, Bauer, Bluechel, Cantu, Gaspard, Johnson, L. Kreidler, Metcalf, Murray, Niemi, Owen, Rinehart, Saling, L. Smith, Talmadge, West, Williams, and Wojahn.

Staff: Bill Freund (786-7715)

Hearing Dates: March 4, 1991; March 5, 1991

BACKGROUND:

Research findings from national and state studies and demographic data indicate that an increasing number of children are at risk of not performing up to their potential in school, and of even dropping out of school. Contributing reasons include: child abuse and neglect, poverty, family transiency, substance abuse, and poor health and nutrition. It is proposed that providing counseling and related prevention and intervention services at the elementary grade level will enhance the educational experience for students and educators.

SUMMARY:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction establishes a voluntary grant program to assist school districts in providing prevention and intervention programs and services for children in preschool through grade six. The name of the program is FAIR START.

The Superintendent distributes funds equitably to all school districts based on the district's enrollment in grades kindergarten through six. FAIR START funds may not be used to replace funding for existing activities.

Districts accepting FAIR START allocations must match the allocation at a minimum 20 percent of the cost of the program. The district match may consist of identified state or federal funds, local funds; contributions of services, materials, supplies, or physical facilities including services provided by child intervention specialists employed by the state, and district funds currently used for prevention and intervention services.

School and educational service districts accepting FAIR START funds are required to establish formal agreements for coordinated case management with lead mental health agencies or other public or private social service agencies that are present in the community.

Districts use FAIR START funds to implement or enhance an elementary grades' prevention and intervention program using child intervention specialists: school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, school social workers, mental health professionals, child psychiatrists, children's mental health specialists, or appropriate public or private providers of professional health care.

Districts are required to emphasize the delivery of services using child intervention specialists who are school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, or school social workers.

Districts must submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction certain information prior to receiving the FAIR START allocation, including: the district's policy on prevention and intervention services or commitment to adopt such a policy; district goals, referral and notification procedures; program evaluation procedures, how child intervention specialists will be used, and how grant funds will be used for related in-service purposes.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction develops specific measures to evaluate the success of the projects and the FAIR START program. The Superintendent reports biennially to the Legislature and the Governor on the FAIR START program. The first report is due December 1, 1992.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Districts are required to provide services to children under the FAIR START program on a priority basis determined by need as defined locally. Districts report their definitions of need to the OSPI and the OSPI reports this information to the Legislature and the Governor.

Districts may use FAIR START funds to supplant funds from other sources only if the source of the other funds is lost for reasons beyond the control of the district.

Language is added to clarify that municipal funds may be used by districts to meet the 20 percent local match requirement.

Districts may contract with governmental or nongovernmental organizations or community-based professional health care providers to provide services under the local FAIR START program.

Districts may incorporate, as part of the local FAIR START program, a primary intervention program model.

The OSPI and DSHS are required to adopt rules which provide for appropriate coordination between the Primary Intervention Program (PIP) and FAIR START programs.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SECOND SUBSTITUTE:

The intent section is deleted.

Multicultural considerations are added as one of the factors which should be considered in developing prevention and intervention services for elementary students.

The appropriation of \$50,000,000 to the Superintendent of Public Instruction is deleted and the bill is made contingent on funding in the budget.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: available

TESTIMONY FOR:

The need for prevention and intervention services is real. The initial funding for FAIR START has been important but there are many children who need services who are not receiving it. Early intervention does make a difference.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED (Education): Gary Ness, HARK Coalition (pro); Donna Tucker-Smith, HARK/ Elementary School Principals Association of Washington pro); Paige Tangney, HARK/Washington State Association of School Psychologists (pro); Norm Walker,

HARK/Washington School Counselors Association (pro); Gary Tollefsen, HARK/Washington State PTA (pro); Walter Ball, Association of Washington School Principals (pro); Dwayne Slate and Esther Stefaniw, Washington State School Directors' Association (pro); John Kvamme, Tacoma Public Schools (pro); Kris Van Gorkom, Washington Association of School Administrators (pro); Marcia Costello, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (pro); Barbara Myers, Pat Huggins, Pam Harrington and Shirley Roberts, Issaquah School District (pro); Pat Thibaudeau, Washington Community Mental Health Council (pro); Judy Hartmann, Washington Education Association (pro)

TESTIFIED (Ways & Means): Gary Ness, HARK (pro); Karyn Clarke, Tacoma Public Schools (pro); Earl Dedman, African-American Parent Council (pro)