

**SENATE BILL REPORT**

**SB 5657**

**AS OF MARCH 5, 1991**

**Brief Description:** Creating the family-school partnership program.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Thorsness, Rinehart, Johnson, Amondson, A. Smith and Erwin.

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Staff:** Susan Mosborg (786-7439)

**Hearing Dates:** March 5, 1991

**BACKGROUND:**

Research studies have consistently linked parental involvement in their children's education with higher student grades and test scores, more positive student attitudes and behaviors, and improved school climates. In addition, research is yielding information about which strategies are most effective in encouraging parental involvement, including information about what works with the families of at-risk students. Many schools in Washington and throughout the nation are attempting to make parental involvement a key component of their school restructuring plans.

**SUMMARY:**

The Family-School Partnership Program is created in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). OSPI shall help schools, parents, and school districts develop family involvement programs by providing grants and technical assistance.

OSPI shall disseminate descriptions of promising family and community involvement programs that have been evaluated for their effectiveness and develop models for: (1) programs in the areas of family involvement at school, in learning activities at home, and in school governance and advocacy; (2) enhancing teachers' and administrators' communication with students' families; and (3) assessing family and community involvement and incorporating them into school improvement goals. OSPI shall also study the feasibility of creating a statewide toll-free telephone number to provide information to families on open enrollment, family involvement, and other education issues.

OSPI is encouraged to create a team of educators, parents, and family involvement experts to assist with the technical assistance program.

OSPI shall grant funds for school districts to plan and implement family involvement programs. Criteria for grant awards include demonstration of collaboration by families, teachers, and administrators, and evaluation of the ability to successfully involve families of at-risk students and families with limited English proficiency.

School districts and the OSPI may contract for services.

School districts, when adopting policies assuring parents access to children's classrooms, are required to also provide that parents are welcome in schools.

When teachers and administrators are evaluated, the evaluation criteria must include communication with students' parents or guardians.

**Appropriation:** \$1,000,000 to OSPI: \$750,000 for the grant program; \$250,000 for the technical assistance program

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested February 14, 1991