

2SHB 2822 - S AMD 333

By Senator Hargrove and Stevens

ADOPTED 03/11/2008

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 2.56 RCW
4 to read as follows:

5 Subject to the availability of funds appropriated therefor, the
6 family and juvenile court improvement grant program is created.

7 (1) The purpose of the program is to assist superior courts in
8 improving their family and juvenile court systems, especially in
9 dependency cases, with the goals of:

10 (a) Assuring a stable and well-trained judiciary in family and
11 juvenile law providing consistency of judicial officers hearing all of
12 the proceedings in a case involving one family, especially in
13 dependency cases; and

14 (b) Ensuring judicial accountability in implementing specific
15 principles and practices for family and juvenile court.

16 (2) The administrator for the courts shall develop and administer
17 the program subject to requirements in section 2 of this act. As part
18 of administering the program, the administrator for the courts shall
19 define appropriate outcome measures, collect data, and gather
20 information from courts receiving grants.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 2.56 RCW
22 to read as follows:

23 (1) A superior court may apply for grants from the family and
24 juvenile court improvement grant program by submitting a local
25 improvement plan with the administrator for the courts. To be eligible
26 for grant funds, a superior court's local improvement plan must meet
27 the criteria developed by the administrator for the courts and approved
28 by the board for judicial administration. The criteria must be

1 consistent with the principles adopted for unified family courts. At
2 a minimum, the criteria must require that the court's local improvement
3 plan meet the following requirements:

4 (a) Commit to a chief judge assignment to the family and juvenile
5 court for a minimum of two years;

6 (b) Implementation of the principle of one judicial team hearing
7 all of the proceedings in a case involving one family, especially in
8 dependency cases;

9 (c) Require court commissioners and judges assigned to family and
10 juvenile court to receive a minimum of thirty hours specialized
11 training in topics related to family and juvenile matters within six
12 months of assuming duties in family and juvenile court. Where
13 possible, courts should utilize local, statewide, and national training
14 forums. A judicial officer's recorded educational history may be
15 applied toward the thirty-hour requirement. The topics for training
16 must include:

17 (i) Parentage;

18 (ii) Adoption;

19 (iii) Domestic relations;

20 (iv) Dependency and termination of parental rights;

21 (v) Child development;

22 (vi) The impact of child abuse and neglect;

23 (vii) Domestic violence;

24 (viii) Substance abuse;

25 (ix) Mental health;

26 (x) Juvenile status offenses;

27 (xi) Juvenile offenders;

28 (xii) Self-representation issues;

29 (xiii) Cultural competency;

30 (xiv) Roles of family and juvenile court judges and commissioners;

31 and

32 (d) As part of the application for grant funds, submit a spending
33 proposal detailing how the superior court would use the grant funds.

34 (2) Courts receiving grant money must use the funds to improve and
35 support family and juvenile court operations based on standards
36 developed by the administrator for the courts and approved by the board
37 for judicial administration. The standards may allow courts to use the
38 funds to:

1 (a) Pay for family and juvenile court training of commissioners and
2 judges or pay for pro tem commissioners and judges to assist the court
3 while the commissioners and judges receive training;

4 (b) Increase judicial and nonjudicial staff, including
5 administrative staff to improve case coordination and referrals in
6 family and juvenile cases, guardian ad litem volunteers or
7 court-appointed special advocates, security, and other staff;

8 (c) Improve the court facility to better meet the needs of children
9 and families;

10 (d) Improve referral and treatment options for court participants,
11 including enhancing court facilitator programs and family treatment
12 court and increasing the availability of alternative dispute
13 resolution;

14 (e) Enhance existing family and children support services funded by
15 the courts and expand access to social service programs for families
16 and children ordered by the court; and

17 (f) Improve or support family and juvenile court operations in any
18 other way deemed appropriate by the administrator for the courts.

19 (3) The administrator for the courts shall allocate available grant
20 moneys based upon the needs of the court as expressed in their local
21 improvement plan.

22 (4) Money received by the superior court under this program must be
23 used to supplement, not supplant, any other local, state, and federal
24 funds for the court.

25 (5) Upon receipt of grant funds, the superior court shall submit to
26 the administrator for the courts a spending plan detailing the use of
27 funds. At the end of the fiscal year, the superior court shall submit
28 to the administrator for the courts a financial report comparing the
29 spending plan to actual expenditures. The administrator for the courts
30 shall compile the financial reports and submit them to the appropriate
31 committees of the legislature.

32 **Sec. 3.** RCW 2.56.030 and 2007 c 496 s 302 are each amended to read
33 as follows:

34 The administrator for the courts shall, under the supervision and
35 direction of the chief justice:

36 (1) Examine the administrative methods and systems employed in the

1 offices of the judges, clerks, stenographers, and employees of the
2 courts and make recommendations, through the chief justice, for the
3 improvement of the same;

4 (2) Examine the state of the dockets of the courts and determine
5 the need for assistance by any court;

6 (3) Make recommendations to the chief justice relating to the
7 assignment of judges where courts are in need of assistance and carry
8 out the direction of the chief justice as to the assignments of judges
9 to counties and districts where the courts are in need of assistance;

10 (4) Collect and compile statistical and other data and make reports
11 of the business transacted by the courts and transmit the same to the
12 chief justice to the end that proper action may be taken in respect
13 thereto;

14 (5) Prepare and submit budget estimates of state appropriations
15 necessary for the maintenance and operation of the judicial system and
16 make recommendations in respect thereto;

17 (6) Collect statistical and other data and make reports relating to
18 the expenditure of public moneys, state and local, for the maintenance
19 and operation of the judicial system and the offices connected
20 therewith;

21 (7) Obtain reports from clerks of courts in accordance with law or
22 rules adopted by the supreme court of this state on cases and other
23 judicial business in which action has been delayed beyond periods of
24 time specified by law or rules of court and make report thereof to
25 supreme court of this state;

26 (8) Act as secretary of the judicial conference referred to in RCW
27 2.56.060;

28 (9) Submit annually, as of February 1st, to the chief justice, a
29 report of the activities of the administrator's office for the
30 preceding calendar year including activities related to courthouse
31 security;

32 (10) Administer programs and standards for the training and
33 education of judicial personnel;

34 (11) Examine the need for new superior court and district court
35 judge positions under an objective workload analysis. The results of
36 the objective workload analysis shall be reviewed by the board for
37 judicial administration which shall make recommendations to the
38 legislature. It is the intent of the legislature that an objective

1 workload analysis become the basis for creating additional district and
2 superior court positions, and recommendations should address that
3 objective;

4 (12) Provide staff to the judicial retirement account plan under
5 chapter 2.14 RCW;

6 (13) Attend to such other matters as may be assigned by the supreme
7 court of this state;

8 (14) Within available funds, develop a curriculum for a general
9 understanding of child development, placement, and treatment resources,
10 as well as specific legal skills and knowledge of relevant statutes
11 including chapters 13.32A, 13.34, and 13.40 RCW, cases, court rules,
12 interviewing skills, and special needs of the abused or neglected
13 child. This curriculum shall be completed and made available to all
14 juvenile court judges, court personnel, and service providers and be
15 updated yearly to reflect changes in statutes, court rules, or case
16 law;

17 (15) Develop, in consultation with the entities set forth in RCW
18 2.56.150(3), a comprehensive statewide curriculum for persons who act
19 as guardians ad litem under Title 13 or 26 RCW. The curriculum shall
20 be made available July 1, 2008, and include specialty sections on child
21 development, child sexual abuse, child physical abuse, child neglect,
22 domestic violence, clinical and forensic investigative and interviewing
23 techniques, family reconciliation and mediation services, and relevant
24 statutory and legal requirements. The curriculum shall be made
25 available to all superior court judges, court personnel, and all
26 persons who act as guardians ad litem;

27 (16) Develop a curriculum for a general understanding of crimes of
28 malicious harassment, as well as specific legal skills and knowledge of
29 RCW 9A.36.080, relevant cases, court rules, and the special needs of
30 malicious harassment victims. This curriculum shall be made available
31 to all superior court and court of appeals judges and to all justices
32 of the supreme court;

33 (17) Develop, in consultation with the criminal justice training
34 commission and the commissions established under chapters 43.113,
35 43.115, and 43.117 RCW, a curriculum for a general understanding of
36 ethnic and cultural diversity and its implications for working with
37 youth of color and their families. The curriculum shall be available
38 to all superior court judges and court commissioners assigned to

1 juvenile court, and other court personnel. Ethnic and cultural
2 diversity training shall be provided annually so as to incorporate
3 cultural sensitivity and awareness into the daily operation of juvenile
4 courts statewide;

5 (18) Authorize the use of closed circuit television and other
6 electronic equipment in judicial proceedings. The administrator shall
7 promulgate necessary standards and procedures and shall provide
8 technical assistance to courts as required;

9 (19) Develop a Washington family law handbook in accordance with
10 RCW 2.56.180;

11 (20) Administer state funds for improving the operation of the
12 courts and provide support for court coordinating councils, under the
13 direction of the board for judicial administration;

14 (21) Administer the family and juvenile court improvement grant
15 program;

16 (22)(a) Administer and distribute amounts appropriated from the
17 equal justice subaccount under RCW 43.08.250(2) for district court
18 judges' and qualifying elected municipal court judges' salary
19 contributions. The administrator for the courts shall develop a
20 distribution formula for these amounts that does not differentiate
21 between district and elected municipal court judges.

22 (b) A city qualifies for state contribution of elected municipal
23 court judges' salaries under (a) of this subsection if:

24 (i) The judge is serving in an elected position;

25 (ii) The city has established by ordinance that a full-time judge
26 is compensated at a rate equivalent to at least ninety-five percent,
27 but not more than one hundred percent, of a district court judge salary
28 or for a part-time judge on a pro rata basis the same equivalent; and

29 (iii) The city has certified to the office of the administrator for
30 the courts that the conditions in (b)(i) and (ii) of this subsection
31 have been met.

32 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. If specific funding for the purposes of this
33 act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not provided by
34 June 30, 2008, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act is null and
35 void."

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1 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "program;" strike the
2 remainder of the title and insert "amending RCW 2.56.030; adding new
3 sections to chapter 2.56 RCW; and creating a new section."

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