

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6371

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 7, 2020

Title: An act relating to school library information and technology programs.

Brief Description: Expanding school library information and technology programs.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Warnick, Saldaña, Liias, Brown, Wilson, L., Das, Van De Wege and Nguyen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/05/20, 2/07/20 [DPS-WM].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to provide oversight of school library information and technology programs through various means, including establishing a single point of contact and data collection and analysis.
- Requires OSPI to submit reports to the Legislature on school library information and technology programs, including on best practices, policy recommendations, and the benefits of these programs.
- Provides for an additional allocation to school districts with teacher-librarian-to-student ratios above the prototypical level.
- Requires school districts to provide access to library information and technology programs for all students, and to update policies accordingly.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6371 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Holy, Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen, Salomon and Wagoner.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

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.

Background: Teacher-Librarians. School library and information technology programs are defined in Washington law as school-based programs staffed by a certificated teacher-librarian. Teacher-librarians are required to collaborate as instructional partners with content goals in all subject areas and to assist high school students with high school and beyond plans required for graduation. Other duties include integrating information and technology into curriculum and instruction, and instructing students in critical information consumption.

Basic Education Funding Allocation. Funding allocations are set in Washington law. These include minimum staff allocations and allocations for materials and operating costs, set at per annual averages for full-time equivalent (FTE) students in grades K-12. Allocations are set at a level of a prototypical school, with different allocation levels for staffing at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. The current prototypical school size is:

- 400 students for an elementary school—grades kindergarten through six;
- 432 students for a middle school—grades seven and eight; and
- 600 students for a high school—grades nine through 12.

The current minimum prototypical allocation for teacher librarians is 0.663 FTE at the elementary school level, 0.510 FTE at the middle school level, and 0.523 FTE at the high school level.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction Oversight of School Library Information and Technology Programs. OSPI must oversee school library information and technology programs (library programs) by, at a minimum:

- identifying a single point of contact at OSPI to respond to library information and technology inquiries;
- gathering and analyzing data related to these programs and the assessment of students' educational technology literacy and technology fluency;
- assisting public schools with the effective implementation of library programs;
- supporting public schools in evaluating how they are providing opportunities for every student to meet basic education technology literacy and fluency goals, as well as identifying and sharing assessments in this area; and
- producing, in consultation with the Washington State School Directors' Association, guidance for school districts on best models and practices for library programs.

Reports and Study on Library Information and Technology Programs. By December 15, 2020, and December 15, 2021, OSPI must submit preliminary and final reports, respectively, to the Legislature on information and recommendations relating to library programs. The reports must include various minimum elements, including a summary of previous reports, data on library programs, best models and practices, recommendations on program improvement and data collection, and suggested funding and policy changes.

OSPI must conduct a study on the benefits of these library programs and teacher-librarians on student educational outcomes, to be submitted to the Legislature by December 15, 2022.

Allocation of State Funding. Beginning September 1, 2021, school districts with a teacher-librarian ratio greater than the prototypical level will receive an additional allocation to the extent of, and proportionate to, the school district's demonstrated ratio of teacher-librarians for that level, up to a maximum allocation of 1.0 teacher-librarians per prototypical school.

School District Policies. By September 1, 2022, each school district must adopt or amend a policy that acknowledges the requirement for districts to provide every student with access to school library programs, as well as procedures that describe how students can access school library information and technology resources and materials.

Every board of directors must provide resources and materials for the operation of library programs so every student in the school district has access to these programs.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Removes language relating to modification of the prototypical funding model.
- Requires OSPI, within existing resources, to provide technical assistance on establishing library programs to schools that do not have these programs, beginning with certain low-income schools.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Washington law mirrors what has occurred across the state in affirming the role that teacher-librarians have in the 21st century. The bill takes out the "as deemed necessary" language to ensure that resources are being used to have library and technology programs available to all students. It is very important that students know how to research in the current environment, and teacher-librarians help students with this important knowledge. The reports will provide actual data on the benefits of teacher-librarians. Not all schools have the ability to utilize the benefits that teacher-librarians provide. Lower-income students especially benefit from technology information programs. By some counts, only 10 percent of library materials funding is actually getting to school library programs. Even in large districts, not every school is able to provide equitable access to library programs. Library programs offer access to programs and services that they would not otherwise receive, especially since some students do not have regular access to public libraries.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Lucinda Young, Washington Education Association; Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Association; Jodi Kruse, Teacher-Librarian, RA Long High School; Trish Henry, Learning Coordinator, Mead Learning Services; Rebecca Wynkoop, Teacher-Librarian, Robert Eagle Staff Middle School.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.