
Education Committee

ESSB 5102

Brief Description: Concerning school library information and technology programs.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wellman, Frame, Hunt, Lias, Saldaña, Trudeau, Valdez and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires school district boards of directors to provide resources and materials for the operation of school library information and technology (LIT) programs, and to ensure that each student has access to an LIT program that meets specified requirements.
- Requires school districts to adopt policies and procedures related to district obligations for LIT programs and student access.
- Permits school districts meeting specified requirements to staff LIT programs with noncertificated staff members that are overseen by a certificated teacher-librarian.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to provide data, information, summaries of best practices, and other assistance to school districts for the purpose of implementing LIT program requirements.

Hearing Date: 3/21/23

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Library Information and Technology Programs.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

School district boards of directors must provide resources and materials for the operation of school library information and technology (LIT) programs that they deem necessary for the proper education of the district's students or as otherwise required by law or administrative rule.

An LIT program is a school-based program that is staffed by a certificated teacher-librarian and provides a broad, flexible array of services, resources, and instruction that support student mastery of the state learning standards.

The teacher-librarian, through an LIT program, must collaborate as an instructional partner to help all students meet the content goals in all subject areas, and assist high school students completing High School and Beyond Plans required for graduation.

The teacher-librarian's duties may also include collaborating with schools to:

- integrate information and technology into curricula and instruction;
- provide information management instruction to students and staff about how to effectively use emerging learning technologies for school and lifelong learning, as well as in the appropriate use of computers and mobile devices in an educational setting;
- help teachers and students efficiently and effectively access the highest quality information available while using information ethically;
- instruct students in digital citizenship, including how to be critical consumers of information and provide guidance about thoughtful and strategic use of online resources; and
- create a culture of reading in the school community by developing a diverse, student-focused collection of materials.

Some funding for teacher-librarian positions is provided in the state prototypical school funding model that is used for traditional public schools, with different funding ratios for elementary, middle, and high schools. With some exceptions, the distribution formulae are for allocation purposes only, meaning school districts have significant discretion over how the provided moneys are used.

Summary of Bill:

School district boards of directors are expressly directed to provide resources and materials for the operation of LIT programs, with provisions granting districts discretion in determining the amount of provided resources and materials deleted. The boards of directors must also ensure that each student has access to an LIT program that meets specified requirements.

By September 1, 2024, each school district must adopt or amend:

- a policy acknowledging the requirement for boards of directors to provide every student with access to LIT programs; and
- procedures describing how students can access resources and materials from those programs.

Provisions specifying that LIT programs must be staffed by a certificated teacher-librarian are modified to specify that they must be overseen by a certificated teacher-librarian. The statutory list of delineated duties of teacher-librarians is amended to include overseeing classified staff, including library technicians, library assistants, and others to implement the school LIT program.

A school district with fewer than 2,000 students may staff an LIT program with a noncertificated staff member if the district has made all reasonable efforts to staff the program with a certificated teacher-librarian. In these circumstances, a school district is encouraged to partner with a nonprofit or government entity, including a public library, regional library, or public institution of higher education, to provide staffing services.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must provide data, information, summaries of best practices, and other assistance to school districts for the purpose of implementing LIT program requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.