

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5102

As Passed Senate, March 6, 2023

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

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, Liias, Saldaña, Trudeau, Valdez and Wilson, C.).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/23/23, 2/06/23 [DPS-WM, DNP, w/oRec].

Ways & Means: 2/14/23, 2/22/23 [DPS (EDU), w/oRec].

Floor Activity: Passed Senate: 3/6/23, 28-20.

Brief Summary of Engrossed First Substitute Bill

- Directs each school district to adopt or amend a policy that acknowledges the requirement that each school board provide every student with access to school library information and technology programs.
- Requires each school district to adopt or amend procedures that describe how students can access school library information and technology resources and materials.
- Requires every school board to provide resources and materials for the operation of a school library information and technology program and that each student have access to a school library information and technology program as determined by the district's board of directors and consistent with statutory requirements.
- States that the Superintendent of Public Instruction will provide data, information, best practices, and other assistance to help facilitate implementation of this act.

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.

- Allows a school district that has a student enrollment of less than 2000 pupils to staff a school library information and technology program with a noncertificated staff member if the district has made all reasonable efforts to staff the program with a certificated teacher-librarian.
- Authorizes and encourages a school district in those instances to partner with a nonprofit or government entity to provide staffing services, including, but not limited to, a library or regional library, or an institution of higher education.
- Amends various definitions to clarify staffing roles.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5102 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hunt and Pedersen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Dozier.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Mullet.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5102 as recommended by Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Rolfes, Chair; Robinson, Vice Chair, Operating & Revenue; Mullet, Vice Chair, Capital; Rivers, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Billig, Conway, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Hunt, Keiser, Muzzall, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Van De Wege, Wagoner and Wellman.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Wilson, L., Ranking Member, Operating; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Member, Operating; Schoesler, Ranking Member, Capital; Warnick, Assistant Ranking Member, Capital; Braun and Torres.

Staff: Kayla Hammer (786-7305)

Background: School Library and Information Technology Programs. School library and information technology programs are defined in Washington law as school-based programs staffed by a certificated teacher-librarian that provide a broad, flexible array of services, resources, and instruction that support student mastery of state standards in all subject areas and the implementation of the district's school improvement plan.

Every board of directors is required to provide resources and materials for the operation of school library information, and technology programs, as the board deems necessary, for the proper education of the district's students, or as other required by law or rule of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

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 may include, but are not limited to:

- integrating information and technology into curriculum and instruction;
- providing information management instruction to students and staff;
- helping teachers and students efficiently and effectively access the highest quality information available while using information ethically;
- instructing students in critical information consumption; and
- creating a culture of reading in the school community by developing a diverse, student-focused collection of materials and by facilitating school-wide reading initiatives along with providing individual support and guidance for students.

Summary of Engrossed First Substitute Bill: By September 1, 2024, each school district must adopt or amend:

- a policy that acknowledges the requirement for boards of directors to provide every student with access to school library information and technology programs; and
- 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 a school library information and technology program. Each student shall have access to a school library information and technology program, as determined by the board of directors and consistent with statutory requirements.

A school district that has a student enrollment of less than 2000 pupils may staff a school library information and technology program with a noncertificated staff member if the district has made all reasonable efforts to staff the program with a certificated teacher-librarian. In such a circumstance, a school district is authorized and encouraged to partner with a nonprofit or government entity to provide staffing services including, but not limited to, a library or regional library, or an institution of higher education.

The definition of "school library information and technology program" is amended to a school-based program that is overseen by a certificated teacher-librarian, as opposed to

staffed by a certificated teacher-librarian. Overseeing of classified staff is added to the list of potential duties of a teacher-librarian.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction will provide data, information, best practices, and other assistance to help facilitate school district implementation of this act.

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 (Early Learning & K-12 Education): *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: The teacher-librarian is a navigator of technology for students and staff. This bill says that every school should have a library program. Schools are not providing all students with library programs. Librarians teach how to learn and how to discover. Many school districts do not have a library program due to the current language in statute. Not every community has implemented a program, often due to differences in resources.

CON: The bill would require a certified teacher-librarian without properly funding the position. Rural school districts have issues with finding certified teachers in specific areas.

OTHER: Not every community will be able to administer a program off of the current allocation amounts.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Rebecca Dzamov; Carolyn Logue, Washington Library Association; Eryn Duffee, Teacher-Librarian; Gavin Downing, Teacher-Librarian; Craig Seasholes; Lisa Layera; Christie Kaaland.

CON: Michael Olsen, Kettle Falls School District.

OTHER: Marnie Maraldo, Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA).

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): No one.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute (Ways & Means): PRO: This bill already exists in statute but is not being utilized. Many schools do not have teacher librarians, and this bill will provide means for the schools to acquire them. It is important to have someone who is trained to integrate library and technology information into students' curriculum. Depending on the school district, students currently have radically different

access to knowledge about technology and library programs. This will be a lifechanging resource for students at small schools that haven't been able to afford teacher librarians. The proposed amendment should be passed.

CON: This will impose a one size fits all approach that will lead to many employees being displaced. School libraries have many staffing structures that can provide outstanding instruction and technical support to students. The state should instead take a comprehensive approach that recognizes multiple tiers of library staffing supports.

OTHER: There are concerns about implementation. This bill requires school districts to prioritize one area of student learning over others. The current model does not provide sufficient funding.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Ryan Grant, Washington Library Association; Craig Seasholes; Carolyn Logue, WA Library Association; Elizabeth Ebersole, WLA; Mark Ray.

CON: Rick Chisa, Public School Employees of Washington (PSE).

OTHER: Eric Sobotta, Reardan-Edwall School District; Cindy McMullen, Washington State School Directors' Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Carmen Hart-Jensen.