

HB 2658 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/12/17

Action: Do pass with amendments
and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 6-3-0-0

Yeas: 6 - Doherty, Evans, Hernandez, McLain, Sollman, Vial

Nays: 3 - Parrish, Sprenger, Wilson

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Alethia Miller, LPRO Analyst

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to establish pilot program to distribute money to school districts to hire school social workers, increase the working hours of existing school social workers, and enable existing personnel to earn school social worker license. Requires school districts participating in pilot program to annually submit information relating to student attendance rates; report incidences of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying; and how the increase in school social workers affected any other elements of the school system. Appropriates money from the General Fund for the pilot program. Appropriates money from the High School Graduation and College and Career Readiness Fund from Ballot Measure 98 moneys for the pilot program. Requires ODE submit annual report, but allows first submission by October 15, 2018. Takes effect July 1, 2017.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Difference between school social worker and social worker/counselor
- Need for school social workers in school districts and impact on students
- Use of funds to enable existing personnel to become school social worker
- Effective ways for school districts to study the morale of students and teachers
- Use of Ballot Measure 98 money to implement pilot program and maintain fidelity of voters when using BM 98 dollars

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Removes the inclusion of school social workers in the list of qualifying professions for school districts and education service districts to receive moneys for providing behavioral health services and decreasing rates of absenteeism. Removes the \$20,000,000 allocation of General Fund resources. Appropriates money from the High School Graduation and College and Career Readiness Fund from Ballot Measure 98 moneys for the pilot program. Requires Oregon Department of Education (ODE) submit annual report, but allows first submission by October 15, 2018. Removes the requirement that each school district report to ODE on the morale of students and teachers.

BACKGROUND:

School districts already employ social workers, including the Beaverton School District, Portland Public Schools and Reynolds School District. Other school districts like Tigard-Tualatin and Hillsboro employ personnel as coordinator care positions who can perform several professions within a district. There are approximately three dozen school social workers licensed by the Teachers Standards and Practices Commission, which is separate from licensed social workers.

House Bill 2658-A would appropriate money from Ballot Measure 98 to create a pilot program to employ school social workers, increase the working hours of existing school social workers, and enable existing personnel to earn

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their school social worker license. Those districts participating in the program will submit information annually on student attendance rates; report incidences of harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying; and how increase in school social workers affected any other elements of the school system.