

HB 2957 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Early Childhood and Family Supports

Action Date: 04/18/17

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

Vote: 9-0-0-0

Yeas: 9 - Bynum, Hack, Hayden, Huffman, Keny-Guyer, Lively, Malstrom, Piluso, Smith DB

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to award grants to school districts to provide at least one teacher for every 15 kindergarten students in schools that meet requirements. Eligible schools must have full-day kindergarten program where 90 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced lunch and have capacity in classroom to comply. Allows school district to apply for grant for one or more schools in district. Requires ODE to review and approve applications based on criteria established by Oregon State Board of Education (SBE). Authorizes SBE to adopt rules. Appropriates funds to ODE from General Fund. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2017.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Lower teacher-to-student ratios, particularly in early learning create positive short- and long-term learning outcomes
- Limited budget and resources require targeting students that are low-income
- Large classrooms challenge ability of teachers to provide individual attention and protect children
- Licensed child care program requirements differ from public school requirements
- Educational assistants in classroom

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Directs ODE to award grants to school districts to provide at least one teacher for every 15 kindergarten students in schools that meet requirements. Eligible schools must have full-day kindergarten program with 90 percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch and have capacity in classroom to comply. Allows school district to apply for grant for one or more schools in district. Requires ODE to review and approve applications based on criteria established by SBE.

BACKGROUND:

Research indicates that a high-quality, full day kindergarten experience is critical for short- and long-term academic success and strengthening social and emotional skills. Class size reduction programs are a measure of quality, particularly for kindergarten through third grade. Further, class size reduction is associated with greater gains for low-income students. The experience and qualifications of teachers and the type of engagement between teachers and students impacts the effectiveness of class size reduction programs. States vary in student-teacher ratio-requirements for kindergarten to third grade:

- 14 states require ratios between: 1:15 and 1:18
- 20 states require ratios between: 1:20 and 1:25
- 24 states require ratios between: 1:26 and 1:33, ratios based on grade level or no ratios