



Summary of Initiative 1351

Prepared for members of the Washington House of Representatives by the House Office of Program Research.

This information has been prepared in response to various requests for a summary of Initiative 1351. It is provided for analytical and legislative policy purposes only. It is not provided as an expression of support for or opposition to any ballot measure. These materials are intended to provide general information and are not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of all issues presented by the measure.

BRIEF SUMMARY

- Reduces class size values and increases staffing allocations in the statutory prototypical school funding formula, effective September 1, 2018.
- Requires funding allocated in the 2015-2017 biennium to be no less than 50 percent of the difference between funding as of September 1, 2013, and the funding necessary to support the new statutory class size and staffing allocations.
- Requires full funding of the new statutory class size and staffing allocations by the end of the 2017-2019 biennium.
- Limits state funding for the new prototypical class sizes to funding that is proportionate to a school district's demonstrated actual average class size.
- Permits school districts that demonstrate capital facility needs that prevent class size reductions to use class size reduction funding for school-based personnel who provided direct services to students.

BACKGROUND

Initiative 1351

Initiative 1351 was certified to the ballot on July 24, 2014. The ballot title and ballot measure summary prepared by the Attorney General are as follows:

Ballot Title

Statement of Subject: Initiative Measure No. 1351 concerns K-12 education.

Concise Description: This measure would direct the Legislature to allocate funds to reduce class sizes and increase staffing support for students in all K-12 grades, with additional class-size reductions and staffing increases in high-poverty schools.

Should this measure be enacted into law? Yes [] No []

Ballot Measure Summary

This measure would direct the Legislature to allocate funding for smaller K-12 class sizes, with extra class-size reductions for all grades in defined high-poverty schools and for grades K-3 in all schools; and for increased student support staffing, including counselors, teaching assistants, librarians, and others. Increased funding for these changes would be phased in over four years. Schools lacking enough classrooms to reduce class size could use funding for additional staff providing direct student services.

Basic Education Funding

In 2009, Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261¹ (ESHB 2261) revised the definition of the state program of Basic Education and established new methods for distributing state funds to school districts to support this program. The new "prototypical school" funding formula was based on allocations for assumed class sizes and the administrative, classified, and instructional staff of various types assumed to be needed in a prototypical elementary, middle, and high school of a particular size. The formula also includes funding assumptions about nonstaff costs, district-wide support, central administration, and special programs. The 2009 legislation described the structural components of the new formula, but did not provide numeric values for the various formula elements.

In 2010, Substitute House Bill 2776² (SHB 2776) placed into statute numeric values for the formula that were intended to represent, as closely as possible, a translation of the 2009-2010 budgeted levels of state funding for Basic Education. These "baseline" values were developed by the Funding Formula Technical Working Group established in ESHB 2261.

SHB 2776 also added four enhancements to the program: (1) reduction to 17 students per teacher of the average class size for grades kindergarten through 3 by the 2017-18 school year, beginning with schools where more than 50 percent of students were eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the prior school year (high poverty schools); (2) continued phase-in of funding for full-day kindergarten until statewide implementation is achieved in the 2017-18 school year; (3) increased funding for materials, supplies and operating costs to a specified value adjusted for inflation by the 2015-16 school year; and (4) full implementation of the new pupil transportation funding formula by the 2013-2015 biennium. The enhancement values enacted by the legislature were based, in substantial part, on recommendations from the Quality Education Council's (QEC) January 2010 report to the Legislature.

¹ Chapter 548, Laws of 2009.

² Chapter 236, Laws of 2010.

In addition, the QEC's January 2010 report contained recommendations and provisional discussion values that were not enacted by the Legislature. The provisional discussion values included values for increased staffing levels in grades 4 through 12.

SUMMARY

Initiative 1351 may be known and cited as the Lower Class Sizes for a Quality Education Act.

Findings and Intent

Findings are made regarding the benefits of reducing class sizes. The initiative's purpose is to address the Washington Supreme Court's decision in *McCleary v. the State of Washington*³ by reducing class sizes and increasing staff ratios.

Minimum Allocations for Class Size

The statutory prototypical school funding formula is changed effective September 1, 2018. The class sizes for grades 4 through 12 reflect the provisional discussion values included in the QEC's 2010 report.

Numeric values for average class size, which form the basis of allocations for classroom teachers in the funding formula, are changed as follows:

Grade Level	Current Statutory Class Size	I-1351 Class Size
Grades K-3	25.23/17.0 ⁴	17.0
Grade 4	27.00	25.0
Grades 5-6	27.00	25.0
Grades 7-8	28.53	25.0
Grades 9-12	28.74	25.0
Middle and High School Career and Technical Education	26.57	19.0
Skill Centers	22.76	16.0

Additionally, allocations for average class size in high poverty schools are specified in statute. The following table compares the class size for high poverty schools provided for in the omnibus appropriations act for school year 2014-15 with the Initiative 1351 class size for high poverty schools.

Grade Level	Omnibus Appropriations Act Class Size for High Poverty Schools for School Year 2014-15	I-1351 Class Size for High Poverty Schools
Grades K-1	20.30	15.0
Grades 2-3	24.10	15.0

³ *McCleary v. State*, 173 Wn.2d 477, 269 P.3d 227 (2010).

⁴ The 2010 legislation also specified that between the 2011-2012 and 2017-2018 school years the general education average class size for grades kindergarten through 3 must be reduced to 17.0, beginning with schools with the highest percentage of free and reduced-price meals in the prior school year (SHB 2776).

Grade Level	Omnibus Appropriations Act Class Size for High Poverty Schools for School Year 2014-15	I-1351 Class Size for High Poverty Schools
Grade 4	27.0	22.0
Grades 5-6	27.0	23.0
Grades 7-8	28.53	23.0
Grades 9-12	28.74	23.0

Funding for the specified average class size is provided only to the extent of, and proportionate to, the school district's demonstrated actual average class size, up to the funded level. School districts that demonstrate capital facility needs that prevent them from reducing actual class size to funded levels may use funding provided for minimum class size allocations for school-based personnel who provide direct services to students, but must annually report this expenditure by school and grade level.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must adopt rules to implement these provisions.

Minimum Allocations for Building-Level Staff

The statutory full-time equivalent (FTE) staff allocations for each level of prototypical school are increased to the following:

Staff Type	Elementary School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (400 students)		Middle School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (432 students)		High School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (600 students)	
	Current Allocation	I-1351 Allocation	Current Allocation	I-1351 Allocation	Current Allocation	I-1351 Allocation
Principals, building administrators	1.253	1.30	1.353	1.40	1.880	1.90
Teacher librarians	0.663	1.0	0.519	1.0	0.523	1.0
School nurses	0.076	0.585	0.060	0.888	0.096	0.824
School social workers	0.042	0.311	0.006	0.088	0.015	0.127
School psychologists	0.017	0.104	0.002	0.024	0.007	0.049
Guidance counselors	0.493	0.50	1.116/1.216 ⁵	2.0	1.909/2.009 ⁶ /2.539 ⁷	3.5

⁵ The 2013 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Chapter 4, Laws of 2013 (Third Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5034)) included enhancements to the minimum building level staff allocations for guidance counselors and parent involvement coordinators. Funding was provided for a minimum allocation of 0.0825 FTE parent involvement coordinators for the prototypical elementary school and a minimum allocation of 1.216 FTE and 2.009 FTE guidance counselors for the prototypical middle and high schools, respectively.

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Staff Type	Elementary School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (400 students)		Middle School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (432 students)		High School Building-Level Staff Allocation (FTEs) (600 students)	
Teaching assistance	0.936	2.0	0.700	1.0	0.652	1.0
Office support, non-instructional aides	2.012	3.0	2.325	3.5	3.269	3.5
Custodians	1.657	1.7	1.942	2.0	2.965	3.0
Student and staff safety	0.079	0.0	0.092	0.7	0.141	1.3
Parent involvement coordinators	0.0/0.0825 ⁸	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0

Minimum Allocations for District-wide Support Staff

The allocations of district-wide support staff per 1,000 FTE students are increased as follows:

District-wide Support Staff	Current FTE	I-1351 Proposed FTE
Technology	0.628	2.8
Facilities, maintenance, grounds	1.813	4.0
Warehouse, laborers, mechanics	0.332	1.9

Funding Timeline

For the 2015-2017 biennium, funding allocated under the prototypical school funding formula must be no less than 50 percent of the difference between funding as of September 1, 2013, and the funding necessary to support the new statutory class size and staffing allocations, with priority for additional funding given to the highest poverty schools and districts. By the end of the 2017-2019 biennium, state allocations must fully fund the new statutory class size and staffing allocations.

Effective Date: The initiative takes effect 30 days after the election at which it is approved, except for section 2, providing reduced class sizes and increased staffing allocations in the prototypical school funding formula, which takes effect September 1, 2018.

Staff Contacts: Policy: Megan Wargacki (786-7194) and Fiscal: Jessica Harrell (786-7349)

⁶ See footnote 5.

⁷ The allocation for high school guidance counselors increases to 2.539 beginning September 1, 2014. Chapter 217 § 206, Laws of 2014 (Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 6552).

⁸ See footnote 5.