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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1760**

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**State of Washington**

**64th Legislature**

**2015 Regular Session**

**By** House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Senn, Magendanz, Orwall, Stambaugh, Ortiz-Self, Kagi, Sells, Tharinger, Reykdal, Jinkins, Muri, Goodman, Riccelli, Robinson, Pollet, McBride, and Santos)

1 AN ACT Relating to providing students with skills that promote  
2 mental health and well-being and increase academic performance;  
3 amending RCW 28A.310.500; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300  
4 RCW; and creating a new section.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The education of children is critically  
7 important. In order for children to be ready to learn and ready to  
8 ultimately enter the workforce prepared, they need to have academic,  
9 social, and emotional skills.

10 Responsible decision making, self management, healthy  
11 relationship skills, and self and social awareness are among the  
12 tools students need. These essential skills help improve school  
13 climate and reduce bullying, discipline issues, dropout rates, and  
14 the educational opportunity gap at the same time as they increase  
15 mental well-being, student engagement, and academic performance.

16 Schools teaching developmentally appropriate interpersonal and  
17 decision-making knowledge and skills of social and emotional learning  
18 see large increases in academic performance.

19 Students today experience unfathomable stresses. Over thirty  
20 thousand K-12 students are homeless. Thousands experience bullying,  
21 depression, abuse, or have witnessed domestic violence or other

1 violence in their communities. Many have lost a parent or suffered a  
2 traumatic experience.

3 Emotions and relationships directly affect how students learn and  
4 how they use that learning in other contexts. If a student is  
5 anxious, afraid, or worried about other stresses in his or her life,  
6 those emotions will interfere with attention, memory, and positive  
7 behaviors. By developing social and emotional skills, students will  
8 be equipped with tools to overcome barriers to their learning and  
9 even find solace in education and going to school.

10 The legislature is committed to investing in preventative  
11 strategies in schools to increase student mental health and well-  
12 being in order to support the education of our state's children.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300  
14 RCW to read as follows:

15 (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall convene a work  
16 group to recommend comprehensive benchmarks for developmentally  
17 appropriate interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of  
18 social and emotional learning for grades kindergarten through high  
19 school that build upon what is being done in early learning. These  
20 benchmarks must include, at every grade level, competencies for at  
21 least the following:

22 (a) Self management. Regulating one's emotions to handle stress,  
23 control impulses, and persevere in overcoming obstacles; achieving  
24 personal and academic goals; and expressing emotions appropriately;

25 (b) Self awareness. Accurately assessing one's feelings,  
26 interests, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-  
27 confidence;

28 (c) Social awareness. Being able to empathize with others;  
29 appreciating individual and group similarities and differences;  
30 effectively using family, school, and community resources;

31 (d) Relationship skills. Interacting cooperatively with others;  
32 resisting inappropriate social pressure; dealing effectively with  
33 interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed; and

34 (e) Responsible decision making. Making decisions based on  
35 factors such as ethical standards, safety concerns, social norms,  
36 respect for others, and likely consequences; applying decision-making  
37 skills to daily situations;

38 (2) The work group shall also develop:

1 (a) Guidance for schools, school districts, and educators in  
2 promoting developmentally appropriate interpersonal and decision-  
3 making knowledge and skills of social and emotional learning that:

4 (i) Is culturally competent;

5 (ii) Is linguistically appropriate;

6 (iii) Provides a positive learning environment for students;

7 (iv) Is inclusive of parental involvement;

8 (v) Promotes school safety and a positive school climate;

9 (vi) Includes best practices in assisting students through school  
10 transitions between elementary, middle, and high school; and

11 (vii) Incorporates best practices to address the mental health  
12 continuum of children, from mental well-being and mental health to  
13 mental illness, and acknowledges research around adverse childhood  
14 experiences;

15 (b) Technical advice on how developmentally appropriate  
16 interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of social and  
17 emotional learning fits within existing teacher and principal  
18 evaluations particularly as it relates to school safety and school  
19 climate; and

20 (c) An implementation plan that provides a framework for  
21 incorporating developmentally appropriate interpersonal and decision-  
22 making knowledge and skills of social and emotional learning and is  
23 aligned with other Washington state education initiatives including  
24 college and career readiness, STEM education, twenty-first century  
25 skills, and the Washington state learning standards.

26 (3) To inform the work of the work group, the office of the  
27 superintendent of public instruction shall conduct a survey of  
28 schools to ascertain how many schools in the state are teaching  
29 interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of social and  
30 emotional learning and to understand individual districts' capacity  
31 to implement these frameworks.

32 (4) The work group must include persons with expertise in  
33 interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of social and  
34 emotional learning; child development; job readiness; and mental  
35 health; and the following:

36 (a) One representative from the department of early learning;

37 (b) One representative each from the student support services and  
38 teaching and learning departments within the office of the  
39 superintendent of public instruction;

1 (c) One representative from the educational opportunity gap  
2 oversight and accountability committee;

3 (d) One representative from the office of the education ombuds;

4 (e) One higher education faculty member with expertise in social  
5 and emotional learning;

6 (f) One currently employed K-12 educator and one currently  
7 employed K-12 administrator;

8 (g) One school counselor, one school psychologist, and one social  
9 worker;

10 (h) One mental health counselor; and

11 (i) One representative from a school parent organization.

12 (5) The work group may also include one member from each of the  
13 two largest caucuses of the senate, appointed by the president of the  
14 senate and one member from each of the two largest caucuses of the  
15 house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of  
16 representatives. Each of the two largest caucuses of the senate and  
17 the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives may  
18 determine whether or not a member from that caucus will be appointed.

19 (6) The work group shall consult with: School districts;  
20 educational service districts; school administrators; principals;  
21 teachers; paraeducators; school counselors; community organizations  
22 serving youth; a statewide organization with expertise in  
23 interpersonal and decision-making knowledge and skills of social and  
24 emotional learning; federally recognized tribes; the state's four  
25 ethnic commissions representing the following populations: African-  
26 Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islander  
27 Americans; and community organizations representing communities of  
28 color, immigrant and refugee communities, parents and students, and  
29 homeless children and youth.

30 (7) By October 1, 2016, the work group shall submit a report to  
31 the education committees of the legislature, the governor, and the  
32 superintendent of public instruction that includes its  
33 recommendations for benchmarks, guidance, technical advice, and an  
34 implementation plan. The office of the superintendent of public  
35 instruction shall make the report available to school districts by  
36 including it on the web site.

37 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.310.500 and 2013 c 197 s 6 are each amended to  
38 read as follows:

1       (1) Each educational service district shall develop and maintain  
2 the capacity to offer training for educators and other school  
3 district staff on youth suicide screening and referral, and on  
4 recognition, initial screening, and response to emotional or  
5 behavioral distress in students, including but not limited to  
6 indicators of possible substance abuse, violence, and youth suicide.  
7 An educational service district may demonstrate capacity by employing  
8 staff with sufficient expertise to offer the training or by  
9 contracting with individuals or organizations to offer the training.  
10 Training may be offered on a fee-for-service basis, or at no cost to  
11 school districts or educators if funds are appropriated specifically  
12 for this purpose or made available through grants or other sources.

13       (2) Each educational service district shall develop and maintain  
14 the capacity to serve as a convener, trainer, and mentor for  
15 educators and other school district staff on social and emotional  
16 learning. An educational service district may work with school  
17 districts to create a training model that works best for each school  
18 district and educational service district. An educational service  
19 district may demonstrate capacity by employing staff with sufficient  
20 expertise to offer the training or by contracting with individuals or  
21 organizations to offer the training. Training shall be offered at no  
22 cost to school districts or educators if funds are appropriated  
23 specifically for this purpose or made available through grants or  
24 other sources.

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