

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6155

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to schools.

Brief Description: Changing provisions relating to schools.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Winsley, Franklin, Prentice and Bauer).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 25, 1994, DPA.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; Brough, Ranking Minority Member; B. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; G. Cole; Eide; Hansen; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland and L. Thomas.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: Prior to 1993, school districts were able to withhold a student's transcript when the student transferred to another district if the student owed fines or had not paid for damages to school property.

The 1993 Legislature prohibited districts from withholding the transcripts, even if fines and damages had not been paid. The intent of the 1993 legislation was to ensure that the new school district would have information on the student, especially regarding whether the student had committed a gun violation.

School officials have expressed concern that they are no longer able to collect fines and damages from students who transfer because they are not able to withhold the students' transcripts.

The Department of Social and Health Services provides family reconciliation services for families that are having serious difficulties.

Summary of Amended Bill: Current law requiring school districts to send the permanent record of a transferring student is changed to permit school districts to withhold the student's permanent record if the student has not paid fines or damages against school property.

When a student transfers to another school, the new school may request the student and parent to provide information about the student's history in former schools.

School districts enrolling a new student shall request the student's former school to send the student's permanent record. If the student has not paid fines, the former district shall transmit information on the student's academic performance, any special placements, and records of disciplinary action, but may withhold the student's permanent record or official transcript. The student must be given notice that failure to have a permanent record may result in failure to graduate or exclusion from extracurricular activities.

When the information is requested by the new district, the information must be transmitted by the former district within two school days.

Family reconciliation services may include information on parenting, conflict management, and dispute resolution.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill: The amended bill allows, but does not require, school districts to request information from new students and parents. Several technical changes are made.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 17, 1994.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect July 1, 1994.

Testimony For: School employees need to get background information on incoming students not only to help the student educationally, but in some cases, to be able to protect other students and staff.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Senator McAuliffe; Bob Maier, Washington Education Association; and Walter Ball, Washington School Principals Association.