

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6593

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 4, 1994

Brief Description: Creating the learning and life skills grant program.

SPONSORS: Senators Pelz, M. Rasmussen, Skratek and McAuliffe

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6593 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Pelz, Chairman; McAuliffe, Vice Chairman; Gaspard, Hochstatter, McDonald, Moyer, Nelson, M. Rasmussen, Rinehart, Skratek, A. Smith and Winsley.

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Hearing Dates: January 28, 1994; February 4, 1994

BACKGROUND:

Learning centers provided educational programs for some students who were under the jurisdiction of the court system. The learning centers were operated jointly by local school districts and the Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation in the Department of Social and Health Services. The programs operated for a 220-day school year.

There were six learning centers located in Yakima, Walla Walla, Spokane, Everett, Seattle and Tacoma. During the 1991-93 biennium, \$1.9 million was appropriated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for six school districts to operate the education program at the centers and \$400,000 was appropriated to the Department of Social and Health Services to provide facilities and staff support for the program. The program was not funded in the 1993-95 Omnibus Appropriations Act.

SUMMARY:

The Learning and Life Skills grant program is created. The program is administered by the Department of Social and Health Services to help court-involved youth gain the necessary life and educational skills to obtain a certificate of educational competency, obtain employment, return to a school program, or enter a postsecondary education or job training program.

A "court-involved youth" is a person under 21 who within the past 24 months has served a court-imposed sentence or been on probation or parole, or who is currently involved in a legal proceeding.

The department awards grants to selected districts. To be eligible for grants, school districts must agree to use for the program all the basic education dollars and federal dollars generated by the student. Districts must agree to serve only court-involved youth in the program and give priority to those students who have few other educational options, to design a program to meet the specific needs of court-involved youth and the specific needs of individual students, to collaborate with courts and community organizations, and to clearly define program goals. Attendance records must be kept. Districts must agree to participate in an evaluation of the program by the department.

The department may withhold grant funds if the terms of the agreement are not met.

The grant funds shall be used for facilities and case management services.

The department shall periodically evaluate the program. Items considered in the evaluation include data on youth served, the type of offense, the type of services, time in the program, academic progress, recidivism, and rates of employment and enrollment in postsecondary programs.

The legislation is void if funding is not provided in the budget.

EFFECT OF PROPOSED SUBSTITUTE:

Language is clarified to specify that the basic education funds the district is required to spend on the program is based upon the number of full-time equivalent students participating in the program.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 27, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

When juveniles are released from juvenile institutions, they need an adequate and supportive transition plan. Many of the juveniles do not belong in a regular high school but need services to help them become successful in school or at work.

The programs need to be administered cooperatively. The cooperative arrangement between school districts and the Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation worked well in the past and should be continued.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: PRO: Jack Paul, Tacoma Public Schools; Donna Salcedo, Don Felder, Seattle Public Schools; Victoria Seablom, parent, Seattle Public Schools; Honeye Tinner, student, Interagency

School; Pat Hanson, Dept. of Social and Health Services/Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation; Steve Cordero, Dept. of Social and Health Services/Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation Region 1; Karen McBeth, Dept. of Social and Health Services/Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation Region 4; Ken Kannikeberg, OSPI (concerns)