

2 SSB 5988 - S AMD - 103  
3 By Senator Finkbeiner

4 WITHDRAWN 3/10/99

5 On page 1, after line 3, insert the following:

6 "Sec. 1. RCW 28A.225.020 and 1996 c 134 s 2 are each amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 (1) If a child required to attend school under RCW 28A.225.010  
9 fails to attend school without valid justification, the public school  
10 in which the child is enrolled shall:

11 (a) Inform the child's custodial parent, parents, or guardian by a  
12 notice in writing or by telephone whenever the child has failed to  
13 attend school after one unexcused absence within any month during the  
14 current school year. School officials shall inform the parent of the  
15 potential consequences of additional unexcused absences;

16 (b) Schedule a conference or conferences with the custodial parent,  
17 parents, or guardian and child at a time reasonably convenient for all  
18 persons included for the purpose of analyzing the causes of the child's  
19 absences after two unexcused absences within any month during the  
20 current school year. If a regularly scheduled parent-teacher  
21 conference day is to take place within thirty days of the second  
22 unexcused absence, then the school district may schedule this  
23 conference on that day; and

24 (c) Take steps to eliminate or reduce the child's absences. These  
25 steps shall include, where appropriate, at least one of the following:  
26 Adjusting the child's school program or school or course assignment,  
27 providing more individualized or remedial instruction, providing  
28 appropriate vocational courses or work experience, referring the child  
29 to a community truancy board, requiring the child to attend an  
30 alternative school or program, or assisting the parent or child to  
31 obtain supplementary services that might eliminate or ameliorate the  
32 cause or causes for the absence from school. In any petition for a  
33 civil action under RCW 28A.225.030, the juvenile court shall give  
34 substantial weight to the school's and parent's choice of alternatives.  
35 If the child's parent does not attend the scheduled conference, the  
36 conference may be conducted with the student and school official.

1 However, the parent shall be notified of the steps to be taken to  
2 eliminate or reduce the child's absence.

3 (2) For purposes of this chapter, an "unexcused absence" means that  
4 a child:

5 (a) Has failed to attend the majority of hours or periods in an  
6 average school day or has failed to comply with a more restrictive  
7 school district policy; and

8 (b) Has failed to meet the school district's policy for excused  
9 absences."

10 Renumber the remaining sections consecutively and correct any  
11 internal references accordingly.

12 On page 1, line 2 of the title, after "RCW" strike "28A.225.030"  
13 and insert "28A.225.020, 28A.225.030,"

14 On page 4, after line 2, insert the following:

15 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If any provision of this act or its  
16 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the  
17 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other  
18 persons or circumstances is not affected."

EFFECT: Requires a school to take at least one of the specified  
steps to eliminate or reduce a child's absences. Also requires the  
juvenile court to give deference to the school's decision concerning  
steps to eliminate or reduce a child's absences. Amends the title of  
the bill.

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