

5988-S

Sponsor(s): Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Eide, Long, Finkbeiner, Goings, Zarelli, Patterson, Hargrove, Gardner, Kline, Franklin, Kohl-Welles, B. Sheldon, Winsley and Rasmussen)

Brief Title: Changing provisions relating to truancy.

**SB 5988-S.E - DIGEST**

(DIGEST AS ENACTED)

Provides that, if a child transfers from one school district to another during the school year, the receiving school or school district shall include the unexcused absences accumulated at the previous school or from the previous school district for purposes of this act.

Provides that, when a petition is filed under RCW 28A.225.030 or this act, the juvenile court shall schedule a hearing at which the court shall consider the petition, or if the court determines that a referral to an available community truancy board would substantially reduce the child's unexcused absences, the court may refer the case to a community truancy board under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court.

Requires that, if a referral is made to a community truancy board, the truancy board must meet with the child, a parent, and the school district representative and enter into an agreement with the petitioner and respondent regarding expectations and any actions necessary to address the child's truancy within thirty days of the referral.

Provides that, if after a juvenile court assumes jurisdiction in one county the child relocates to another county, the juvenile court in the receiving county shall, upon the request of a school district or parent, assume jurisdiction of the petition filed in the previous county.

Provides that, if a child continues to be truant after entering into a court-approved order with the truancy board under RCW 28A.225.035, the juvenile court shall find the child in contempt, and the court may order the child to be subject to detention, as provided in RCW 7.21.030(2)(e), or may impose alternatives to detention such as meaningful community service. Failure by a child to comply with an order issued under this provision may not subject a child to detention for a period greater than that permitted under a civil contempt proceeding against a child under chapter 13.32A RCW.

Provides that, if a parent enrolls a child who is six or seven years of age in a public school, the child is required to attend and that parent has the responsibility to ensure the child attends for the full time that school is in session.

Directs the superintendent of public instruction to provide, to the extent funds are appropriated, start-up grants for alternative programs and services that provide instruction and learning for truant, at-risk, and expelled students.

Provides that, if funds are appropriated by the legislature

for this specific purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall contract with the institute of public policy or a similar agency to: Evaluate the effectiveness of the petition process and community truancy boards in chapter 28A.225 RCW in reducing truancy; determine whether students who do return to school after being subject to court action create disruptions for other students in the school, establish patterns of improved attendance, and successfully complete their education program; and determine the costs imposed on school districts by the petition process and other truancy-related procedural requirements required by the legislature in 1992 and thereafter.

The cost determination shall be submitted to the legislature by December 15, 1999. The evaluation shall be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 15, 2000.