
***Children & Family Services
Committee***

HB 1507

Brief Description: Adding educational requirements for new applicants for temporary assistance for needy families.

Sponsors: Representatives Clements, Boldt, Cox, Talcott and McMorris.

Brief Summary of Bill

- *Requires new applicants for TANF (after January 1, 2002) to have completed 12 years of education, received a high school diploma or received a GED.*
- *If a new applicant does not satisfy the education requirements, they will be ineligible for TANF for 5 years from their last date of attendance at an educational institution or when they satisfy the educational requirements, whichever is sooner.*

Hearing Date: 2/8/01

Staff: Tracey Taylor (786-7196).

Background:

In 1996, the federal government enacted welfare reform. The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) shifted the emphasis of the federal program to a Work First- approach.

In Evaluating WorkFirst,- a report prepared by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy in 2000, four barriers to employment were cited. The barriers included: the presence of a child under 2 years of age; no work experience within the previous 2 years; less than 12 years of education; and limited English-speaking ability.

According to a report from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in 1997-98, there were 12,288 reported dropouts.

Summary of Bill:

After January 1, 2002, new applicants for TANF not currently enrolled in an educational institution must have a high school diploma, a general equivalency diploma (GED) or have completed 12 years of educational instruction. If the new applicant does not satisfy this requirement, he or she will remain ineligible until 12 years of educational instruction have been completed, a high school diploma or GED has been earned, or 5 years have elapsed since the last date of attendance at an educational institution. A waiver may also be issued by the local school board for good cause.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2001.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.