
ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2356

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By House Committee on Children & Family Services (originally sponsored by Representatives Kagi, McIntire, Santos, Dickerson, Tokuda, Darneille, Clements, Schual-Berke and Wood)

Read first time 02/04/2002. Referred to Committee on .

1 AN ACT Relating to school placement for school age children in
2 foster care; creating new sections; and declaring an emergency.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) Within existing resources, the
5 department of social and health services, in cooperation with the
6 office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall convene a
7 working group to prepare a plan for the legislature which addresses
8 educational stability and continuity for school age children who enter
9 into short term foster care. The working group shall be comprised of
10 representatives from:

11 (a) The children's administration of the department of social and
12 health services;

13 (b) The special education, transportation, and apportionment
14 divisions of the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

15 (c) The Washington state institute for public policy;

16 (d) School districts;

17 (e) Organizations that regularly advocate for foster children;

18 (f) Foster parents; and

1 (g) Other individuals with related expertise as deemed appropriate
2 by the working group.

3 (2)(a) The working group shall develop a plan for assuring that the
4 best interests of the child are a primary consideration in the school
5 placement of a child in short-term foster care. The plan must:

6 (i) Determine the current status of school placement for children
7 placed in short-term foster care;

8 (ii) Identify options and possible funding sources from existing
9 resources which could be made available to assure that children placed
10 in short-term foster care are able to remain in the school where they
11 were enrolled prior to placement;

12 (iii) Submit recommendations to the legislature by November 1,
13 2002, to assure the best interest of the child receives primary
14 consideration in school placement decisions.

15 (b) The plan shall be developed within existing resources.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The Nooksack Valley and Mount Vernon
17 school districts shall implement a pilot project within existing
18 resources to assist school age children in foster care fewer than
19 seventy-five days to continue attending the school where they were
20 enrolled before entering foster care. The pilot project shall be
21 implemented as provided in this section no later than March 30, 2002,
22 and shall conclude June 30, 2003. Data from the pilot project shall be
23 compiled and submitted to the working group established in section 1 of
24 this act no later than July 30, 2002, and periodically thereafter.

25 (2) A school age child who enters foster care on or after March 30,
26 2002, shall, unless it is determined to be not in the best interest of
27 the child, continue attending the school where she or he was enrolled
28 before entering foster care, notwithstanding the physical location of
29 the child's principal abode. The best interest of the child
30 determination shall be made at the seventy-two hour shelter care
31 hearing, and reviewed at any subsequent shelter care hearing.

32 (3) The department of social and health services, the school the
33 child was attending prior to entering foster care, and the school that
34 serves the child's foster home shall negotiate a plan for transporting
35 the child to the school the child was attending prior to entering
36 foster care.

37 (4) If the department of social and health services places a child
38 in foster care, and the child does not continue to attend the school

1 the child was attending prior to entering foster care, the department
2 shall notify the school about the change.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act is necessary for the immediate
4 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
5 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
6 immediately.

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