

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## 2SHB 1566

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning educational outcomes of youth in out-of-home care.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Carlyle, Kagi, Ryu, Roberts, Moscoso and Pollet).

**House Committee on Early Learning & Human Services**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**  
**Senate Committee on Human Services & Corrections**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**

**Background:**

Beginning in 2001 the Washington Legislature, the Department of Social and Health Services Children's Administration (DSHS), the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) have studied and developed strategies in an effort to improve the educational outcomes for youth residing in out-of-home placements.

Between the years of November 2001 and December 2012, the WSIPP completed 13 evaluations that examine an array of educational outcomes for youth in foster care and studied the impact of specific interventions aimed to improve educational achievement for said youth. Additionally, in 2008 the Legislature enacted Substitute House Bill 2679, which required that the OSPI complete annual reports for the Legislature that examine the experiences and educational outcomes for youth in foster care. In 2003 the Legislature enacted Substitute House Bill 1058, which required the DSHS to maximize educational continuity and achievement for foster children. It mandated, among other provisions, that the DSHS form a multidisciplinary oversight committee to promote best case practice for staff working with school-age youth who are residing in foster homes and monitor educational outcomes of these youth. The collaboration continues to meet and develop action plans to strengthen educational success for children and youth in foster care.

In 2004 the *Braam* settlement agreement, further required the DSHS to create benchmark measures for school stability with an annual goal of no more than 20 percent of youth in the state's care changing schools during a given school year. According to reports, the DSHS is currently in compliance with this educational benchmark as listed in the *Braam* settlement.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Summary:**

The DSHS is required to identify an educational liaison at shelter care hearings and all subsequent review hearings for youth in grades six to 12 and who meet certain eligibility requirements. It is presumed that the educational liaison is the child's parent. If the youth's parent is not able to serve as the educational liaison, it is preferred that the educational liaison be known to the child and be a relative, other suitable person, or the youth's foster parent.

The expectations of the education liaison are outlined and an example of expectations include, but are not limited to, attend school meetings, provide educational advocacy for the youth, seek to understand the youth's academic strengths and future goals, and explore barriers and opportunities for the youth to participate in extracurricular activities.

It is the responsibility of the DSHS to discuss and document any school transfers at Family Team Decision-Making Meetings, to enroll the youth in school, to obtain missing academic or medical records required for school enrollment, to pay any unpaid fines due by the youth to the school district, and to document factors contributing to any school disruptions. Additionally, eligibility requirements for the Passport to College Promise Program expand to include youth participating in the extended foster care program, youth achieving a permanent plan after 17-1/2 years of age, or youth emancipating from foster care on or after January 1, 2007.

A school district representative or school employee is required to review and determine the cause of unexpected absences and proactively support the youth so the youth does not fall behind academically. A school district cannot prevent a youth from enrolling in school if there is incomplete information needed for enrollment. Beginning January 2015 a university based research group must submit an annual report to the Legislature examining education outcomes for youth in foster care.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	86	12	
Senate	47	1	(Senate amended)
House	83	12	(House concurred)

**Effective:** July 28, 2013