
Education Committee

2SSB 5958

Brief Description: Concerning accountability in providing opportunities for certain students to participate in transition services.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators McAuliffe, Hargrove, Rolfes, Mullet, Hasegawa, Chase, McCoy, Fraser, Kline, Fain, Hill, Keiser, King and Rivers).

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires transition services for Individualized Education Plan-eligible special education students (eligible students) be provided from the beginning of transition planning through age 21.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to establish interagency agreements with state agencies providing high school transition services for special education students.
- Requires the Education Research and Data Center to monitor eligible students' outcomes after high school graduation.
- Requires the OSPI to prepare an annual report on the data and outcomes and submit the report to the Legislature.

Hearing Date: 2/24/14

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Currently, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) serves approximately 130,000 students eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Certain special education students are eligible for an Individualized Education Plan or Program (eligible students).

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.

An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written statement for a student with disabilities that is developed, reviewed, and revised annually by an IEP team. The IEP team includes the student's parent or guardian, one of the student's general education teachers, one special education teacher, a representative of the school district, someone who can interpret assessment results, and others who may have special knowledge or expertise. Transition services must be included in the IEP beginning at age 16, or earlier if appropriate, so the IEP can be focused on preparing the student for life after secondary school. To coordinate responsibilities for providing these services, the OSPI has five interagency agreements, including agreements with the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), the Department of Health, and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

The OSPI is required to report annually on the entire state's and each school district's performance in providing special education services to students. This performance data must include the post-high school outcomes of eligible students. The OSPI works with the Center for Change in Transition Services to track and report this data.

The Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), in the Office of Financial Management, collaborates with agencies representing education and employment and the Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program to conduct analyses of early learning, K-12, and higher education program and workforce issues.

Summary of Bill:

The OSPI must establish interagency agreements with the DSHS, the DSB, and any other state agencies that provide high school transition services for special education students. These agreements must not interfere with the existing IEP, nor override any IEP team's decision-making power. The agreements should foster effective multiagency collaboration in providing services to eligible students from the beginning of transition planning through age 21, or until they graduate from high school, whichever occurs first. These agreements are also intended to streamline services and programs, promote efficiencies, and establish a uniform focus on improved outcomes related to self-sufficiency.

To the extent the data is available through data-sharing agreements, the ERDC must monitor the following outcomes for eligible students after high school graduation:

- the number of students who enter certain types of integrated employment, postsecondary education or certain training programs within one year of high school graduation;
- the wages and number of hours worked per pay period;
- the impact of employment on benefits for individuals with disabilities;
- indicators of the types of settings in which these students primarily reside;
- indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency; and
- certain data on those students for whom a postsecondary or integrated employment outcome does not occur within one year of high school graduation.

To the extent that the data is available to the ERDC through data-sharing agreements, the OSPI must prepare an annual report using existing resources and submit the report to the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.