

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1999

As of March 17, 2015

Title: An act relating to coordinating services and programs for foster youth in order to improve educational outcomes.

Brief Description: Coordinating services and programs for foster youth in order to improve educational outcomes.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Carlyle, Kagi, Lytton, Walsh, Sawyer, Pettigrew, Ortiz-Self, Dent, Parker, Caldier, Goodman and Jinkins).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/05/15, 95-3.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/19/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Program of Education Coordination. Since 2012, to the extent that funds are appropriated, the Department of Social and Human Services (DSHS) must contract with at least one nongovernmental entity to administer a program of education coordination from birth to twelfth grade for dependent youth. Dependent, in this case, means abandoned; abused or neglected by a person legally responsible for the care of the child; has no parent, guardian, or custodian capable of adequately caring for the child; or receives extended foster care services. Extended foster care is a voluntary program that offers youth in foster care the option of remaining in care from age 18 until age 21 to support a successful transition to independence.

The nongovernmental entity must have demonstrated success in assisting foster care youth in receiving appropriate educational services. Specified services must be provided. The entity must also engage in a public-private partnership with DSHS and provide a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration, and evaluation. The entity must be co-located in DSHS and have access to all pertinent records of the youth referred to the program. The entity must biannually report outcomes to DSHS.

Demonstration Site to Improve Educational Outcomes for Dependent Youth. The 2013-15 Operating Budget provided funding and direction to DSHS' Children's Administration to

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contract with a nongovernmental entity to establish a demonstration site in western Washington in a school district or districts with a significant number of students who are dependent. Dependent, in this case, means abandoned; abused or neglected by a person legally responsible for the care of the child; has no parent, guardian, or custodian capable of adequately caring for the child; or receives extended foster care services. Extended foster care is a voluntary program that offers youth in foster care the option of remaining in care until age 21 to support a successful transition to independence.

The purpose of the demonstration site is to improve educational outcomes of dependent students by providing individualized education services and monitoring and supporting the completion of educational milestones, remediation needs, and special education needs of these students. Dependent youth eligible for services are students 15 years or older, within the demonstration site. Specified services must be provided. The contract with the nongovernmental entity must be performance-based with a stated goal of improving the graduation rates of foster youth by 2 percent per year over five school years, starting with the 2014-15 school year.

By June 30, 2015, the nongovernmental entity must report demonstration site outcomes to DSHS and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and report to the Legislature on the effectiveness of the demonstration site in increasing graduation rates for dependent youth. Children's Administration must report quarterly to the Legislature on the number of youth eligible and served.

Supplemental Educational Transition Planning (SETuP). In 2007 the Legislature created the Passport to College Program to encourage current and former foster care youth to prepare for, attend, and successfully complete higher education. The program was originally created as a six-year pilot program but in 2012 the Legislature extended the expiration date to June 30, 2022. The Passport to College Program includes SETuP. To the extent that funds are appropriated, DSHS with input from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Office of Student Financial Assistance, and institutions of higher education must contract with at least one nongovernmental entity to develop, implement and administer SETuP for youth in foster care. The entity must have demonstrated success in assisting foster care youth to successfully transition from foster care to independent adulthood. SETuP must include specified services and must be provided to foster care youth beginning at age 14 and then at least every six months thereafter.

Summary of Bill: Program of Education Coordination. The program of education coordination is transferred from DSHS to OSPI. OSPI must administer the program from kindergarten to twelfth grade for dependent youth. The contract with the nongovernmental entity must be outcome driven with a stated goal of reducing barriers to youth success. The entity must semiannually report outcomes to OSPI and DSHS.

Demonstration Sites to Improve Educational Outcomes for Dependent Youth. The contracting duty with at least one nongovernmental entity to establish a demonstration site is transferred from DSHS to OSPI and expanded to two sites, to the extent funds are appropriated. The nongovernmental entity must engage in a public-private partnership with OSPI and is responsible for raising a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration, and evaluation. Eligibility for referral is expanded to include dependent

youth ages 13 through 21 who are not being served by the SETuP program. The nongovernmental entity may be co-located in the DSHS offices and must have access to all pertinent records of the youth referred to the demonstration site. The nongovernmental entity must semiannually report site outcomes to OSPI and DSHS.

SETuP. The SETuP program for youth in foster care is transferred from DSHS to the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). The requisite demonstrated success of the nongovernmental entity is changed to assisting foster care youth to successfully transition from high school to a postsecondary plan, including postsecondary enrollment, career, or service. WSAC's contract with the nongovernmental entity must have a stated goal of improving the graduation rates and postsecondary plan initiation of eligible youth by 2 percent per year over five school years starting with the 2015-16 school year. A new baseline must be established with each new contract.

To be eligible for SETuP, foster care youth must be 13 through 21 years of age and not being served in one of the demonstration sites to improve educational outcomes for dependent youth. SETuP services are changed to the following:

- consultation with schools and DSHS case workers to develop educational plans for and with participating youth;
- age-specific developmental and logistical tasks to be accomplished for high school and postsecondary success;
- facilitating youth participation with appropriate school and local resources that may assist in educational access and success; and
- coordinating youth, caregivers, schools, and social workers to support youth progress in the educational system.

The nongovernmental entity may be co-located in the DSHS offices and must have access to all pertinent records of the youth referred to SETuP. The entity must semiannually report outcomes to WSAC and DSHS. The Passport to College Program's expiration date of June 30, 2022, no longer applies to the SETuP program.

Memoranda of Understanding. DSHS, WSAC, and OSPI must enter into, or revise existing memoranda of understanding that:

- facilitate student referral, data and information exchange, agency roles and responsibilities, and cooperation and collaboration among state agencies and nongovernmental agencies; and
- effectuate transfer of responsibilities from DSHS to OSPI for the program of education coordination and the demonstration site; and from DSHS to WSAC for the SETuP program.

Reports. By November 1, 2016, and biannually thereafter, DSHS, WSAC, and OSPI must submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature regarding the programs and the progress on the goal to make Washington number one in the nation for foster care graduation rates, and postsecondary enrollment and completion. DSHS, WSAC, and OSPI, in consultation with the nongovernmental entities, must submit a report by November 1, 2018, to the Governor and the Legislature regarding whether the transfer of programs from DSHS has resulted in better coordinated services for youth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on March 12, 2015.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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