

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5942

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 19, 2015

Title: An act relating to an outcome evaluation of the national guard youth challenge program.

Brief Description: Concerning an outcome evaluation of the national guard youth challenge program.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Rivers, Rolfes, Litzow, Mullet, Dammeier, Billig and Fain.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/17/15, 2/19/15 [DPS-WM].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5942 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Billig, Fain, Hill, Mullet, Rivers and Rolfes.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: The Legislature has authorized school districts to contract with alternative educational service providers for students. The Washington National Guard Youth Challenge Program (Program) is one of the alternative educational providers that has been listed in statute since 2002. High school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out, ages 16–18, are eligible to apply for the 17-month Program, which includes a five-month residential phase followed by a 12-month mentoring phase. Program graduates can recover up to eight credits, which is approximately 1.3 years of high school credits. The goal is to return graduates to their home high school to graduate on time with their peers.

The Legislature created the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in 1983. WSIPP is governed by a board of directors that represents the Legislature, Governor, and public universities. WSIPP's mission is to conduct non-partisan research at the direction of the Legislature or board of directors. Fiscal and administrative services for WSIPP are provided by The Evergreen State College.

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 of Bill (Recommended Substitute): WSIPP must conduct a longitudinal outcome evaluation of the National Guard Youth Challenge Program to determine the impact of the Program on students as they proceed through high school and into postsecondary education or their careers: The study must follow the students through high school and five years after program completion. It must include a review of national studies of the Youth Challenge Program and other at-risk youth programs and examine outcomes of student cohorts. The evaluation must compare outcomes of students who participated in the program with a similar group of eligible students who did not participate and include a cost-benefit analysis of program effectiveness. OSPI, the education data center, and the National Guard Youth Challenge Program must provide WSIPP with the data necessary to conduct the evaluation. WSIPP must provide an interim report to the Governor and Legislature by December 15, 2022, and a final report by December 15, 2024. The authorization for the study expires August 15, 2025.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Changes the study from a retrospective study to a prospective study of the program, which extends the date of the final report to December 15, 2024. Requires a review of national studies of the Youth Challenge Program and other at-risk youth programs. Removes the specific requirement for three cohorts. Requires the National Guard Program to provide WSIPP the necessary data to conduct the study. Adds an interim report.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: PRO: The National Guard started this program in Washington ten years ago and the National Guard would like to have a longitudinal study of this program. We have anecdotal stories that this program transforms lives and is effective. But a study will really tell us about the level of success of this program. The program targets dropouts. It has an intensive residential phase followed by a mentoring phase when the students are back at their residential high school. I would like to honor the National Guard by sponsoring and passing this study.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator McAuliffe, prime sponsor.