

FINAL BILL REPORT

HB 1561

C 429 L 19
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Ensuring participation on the oversight board for children, youth, and families by current or former foster youth, individuals with current or previous experience in the juvenile justice system, a physician with experience working with children or youth, and individuals residing east of the Cascade mountain range.

Sponsors: Representatives Dent, Senn, Appleton, Doglio, Tharinger, Slatter, Ormsby, Frame and Leavitt.

House Committee on Human Services & Early Learning
Senate Committee on Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation

Background:

Department of Children, Youth, and Families.

The Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) was created in 2017. In 2018 the DCYF assumed responsibility over child welfare and early learning functions previously held by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and the Department of Early Learning. On July 1, 2019, the DCYF assumes responsibility over juvenile justice programs currently administered by the DSHS.

Oversight Board.

The Oversight Board for the DCYF (Oversight Board) was created in 2017, along with the creation of the DCYF. The Oversight Board held its first meetings in 2018.

The Oversight Board receives quarterly updates regarding the implementation of the DCYF until July 1, 2019.

The Oversight Board monitors and ensures that the DCYF achieves certain outcomes and complies with policies and rules.

The Oversight Board may:

- receive reports of the Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds (OFCO);
- obtain access to relevant records in the possession of the OFCO;
- select its officers and adoption of rules for orderly procedure;
- request investigations by the OFCO of administrative acts;

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- request and receive information, outcome data, documents, materials, and records from the DCYF relating to children and family welfare, juvenile rehabilitation, juvenile justice, and early learning;
- determine whether the DCYF is achieving the performance measures;
- review whether DCYF licensors appropriately and consistently applied agency rules in child care facility licensing compliance agreements; and
- conduct annual reviews of a sample of DCYF contracts for services from a variety of program and service areas to ensure that those contracts are performance-based.

The Oversight Board includes the following 18 members:

- two Senators and two members of the House of Representatives from the Legislature, with one member from each major caucus;
- one nonvoting representative from the Office of the Governor;
- one subject matter expert in early learning;
- one subject matter expert in child welfare;
- one subject matter expert in juvenile rehabilitation and justice;
- one subject matter expert in reducing disparities in child outcomes by family income, race, and ethnicity;
- one tribal representative from west of the crest of the Cascade mountains;
- one tribal representative from east of the crest of the Cascade mountains;
- one current or former foster parent representative;
- one representative of an organization that advocates for the best interest of the child;
- one parent stakeholder group representative;
- one law enforcement representative;
- one child welfare caseworker representative;
- one early childhood learning program implementation practitioner; and
- one judicial representative presiding over child welfare court proceedings or other children's matters.

Nonlegislative members of the Oversight Board are nominated by the Governor, subject to approval of the appointed legislators, and serve four-year terms.

The Oversight Board must convene at least two stakeholder meetings per year regarding contracting with the DCYF. The Oversight Board must also review surveys of providers, customers, parent groups, and external services to assess whether the DCYF is effectively delivering services.

Summary:

The membership of the Oversight Board is expanded to include:

- one current or former foster youth under age 25;
- one individual under age 25 with current or previous experience with the juvenile justice system; and
- one physician with experience working with children or youth.

When nominating and approving members of the Oversight Board, the Governor and appointed legislators must ensure that at least five of the Oversight Board members reside east of the Cascade Mountain range.

The Oversight Board members must be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while conducting business of the Oversight Board when authorized by the Oversight Board and within resources allocated for that purpose. Legislative members of the Oversight Board must be reimbursed for travel expenses according to current law.

A number of technical changes are made.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	96	0	
Senate	47	0	(Senate amended)
House	94	0	(House concurred)

Effective: July 28, 2019