

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2711

As of February 21, 2020

Title: An act relating to equitable educational outcomes for foster care and homeless children and youth from prekindergarten to postsecondary education.

Brief Description: Increasing equitable educational outcomes for foster care and homeless children and youth from prekindergarten to postsecondary education.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives J. Johnson, Corry, Stonier, Ormsby, Appleton, Caldier, Davis, Leavitt, Lekanoff, Ramel, Senn, Chopp, Goodman, Fey, Pollet, Callan and Chambers).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/13/20, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/21/20.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in collaboration with other agencies, to convene a temporary task force focused on students in foster care and students experiencing homelessness.
- Assigns certain duties to the task force including reviewing education outcomes, engaging stakeholders, and developing recommendations.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Ailey Kato (786-7434)

Background: Foster and Homeless Student Work Group. The 2018 supplemental budget directed the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF), in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the Department of Commerce's Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection Programs (OHY), and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to convene a work group. The work group was tasked with creating a plan for children and youth in foster care or experiencing homelessness to facilitate educational equity. A report was submitted in January 2019.

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.

Reports Regarding Students in Foster Care. Starting in 2017, DCYF, WSAC, and OSPI, in consultation with nongovernmental entities, must biennially submit a report about the individual and collective progress toward achieving certain goals related to students in foster care.

Between 2012 and 2015, OSPI, in consultation with other agencies, was required to submit reports about the status of the state's plan for cross-system collaboration to promote educational stability and improve educational outcomes for foster children.

Education Research and Data Center. The Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) is housed within the Office of Financial Management and is tasked with maintaining the state's preschool to grade 20 to workforce longitudinal data system. The ERDC links data from multiple state agencies.

Summary of Bill: Task Force. OSPI, in collaboration with DCYF, OHY, and WSAC, must convene a task force with representatives of nongovernmental agencies, the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, chairs and ranking members of the committees of the House of Representatives and Senate with jurisdiction over education, early learning, and human services issues. The task force expires December 1, 2022.

Duties. The task force must focus on students in foster care, those experiencing homelessness, or both. The work group must develop and implement a plan to achieve parity in education outcomes and to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in education outcomes with their general student population peers by 2027. "Students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or both" means students who are currently, or have been, homeless or in foster care within five years of when the plan is applied to the students.

The task force must review certain education outcomes for these students disaggregated by race and ethnicity. OSPI, DCYF, WSAC, and OHY must provide updated education and other necessary data to the ERDC. The ERDC must provide a report to the task force by March 31, 2021, and March 31, 2022. If state funds are not available, the task force may pursue supplemental private funding.

The task force must also:

- evaluate the outcomes, needs, and service array and the specific needs of students of color and those with special education needs; and
- engage stakeholders to provide input on recommendations.

Reports. By October 31, 2020, and October 31, 2022, the task force must submit a report about:

- the progress the state has made toward educational parity in certain categories;
- agency and nongovernmental agency actions; and
- recommendations addressing certain topics.

Nothing permits disclosure of confidential information protected under federal or state law. Confidential information received by the task force retains its confidentiality and may not be further disseminated except as permitted by law.

Reports Regarding Students in Foster Care. Reports regarding students in foster care are eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available. New fiscal note requested on February 14, 2020.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: Yes.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Students in foster care and students experiencing homelessness are some of the most vulnerable youth, and there is racial disproportionality for this population. These students often have issues with attendance and truancy due to transportation and housing issues. This bill recognizes the value of communities and state agencies working together to ensure that these students have similar educational outcomes as their peers. State agencies are committed and want to continue this work, and this work group provides an important opportunity for state agencies to work with the people who are serving these students and have an on-the-ground perspective. This bill should refer to the work group that has already been convened, extend the duration of the work group, and change the legislative membership.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Jesse Johnson, Prime Sponsor; Katara Jordan, Building Changes; Juliette Schindler Kelly, Director of Public Affairs and Strategic Partnerships, College Success Foundation; Frank Ordway, DCYF; Peggy Carlson, OSPI.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.