

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5665

As of February 3, 2019

Title: An act relating to the creation of a youth development work group within the department of children, youth, and families.

Brief Description: Concerning the creation of a youth development work group within the department of children, youth, and families.

Sponsors: Senators Wilson, C., Randall and Das.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services, Reentry & Rehabilitation: 1/30/19.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a youth development work group in the Department of Children, Youth and Families.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, REENTRY & REHABILITATION

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

Background: The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) was created by Legislature in 2017. The stated intent of creating this new agency is to improve the delivery of services and the outcomes for children and families through delivery of these services by housing early learning, child welfare, and juvenile justice services in the same agency. DCYF must lead ongoing work to minimize or eliminate systemic barriers to effective, integrated services across state agencies serving children, youth, and families and help the state create a data-focused environment in which there are aligned outcomes and shared accountability for those outcomes.

Among other duties, DCYF is to establish outcome measure goals and report to the Legislature on these outcome measures and progress toward these goals no less than annually. The outcome measures include:

- improving child development and school readiness;
- preventing child abuse and neglect;
- improving child and youth safety, permanency, and well-being;

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- improving reconciliation of children and youth with their families;
- improving adolescent outcomes;
- reducing future demand for mental health and substance use disorder treatment;
- reducing criminal justice involvement and recidivism; and
- reducing racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparities.

DCYF must report on outcome measures, actions taken, progress toward these goals, and plans for the future year no less than annually.

Summary of Bill: A youth development work group is created within DCYF with the purpose of developing a mission, vision, and goals to support youth ages five to young adulthood with a racial equity and inclusion lens.

Work Group Tasks. The youth development work group shall:

- develop meaningful youth-level, research-based prevention and promotion outcomes and measures addressing: positive identity development; resiliency; strong family, school, peer, and community relationships; gang prevention; on-time high school graduation; and completion of a postsecondary degree or credential attainment.
- work with DCYF to create a meaningful youth engagement strategy and a local community stakeholder engagement strategy to assist in the development and finalization of work group recommendations. Constituencies must include, but are not limited to: parents; communities in which English is not the primary language; immigrant and refugee communities; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities;
- assess and provide recommendations to improve or create new infrastructures and funding streams that support youth development within the department, as well as linkages to other state departments, including the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI);
- recommend local infrastructure, support, and feedback channels to meet statewide prevention and promotion goals;
- make recommendations to integrate and enhance DCYF youth engagement strategies as well as local stakeholder and provider engagement strategies through existing local infrastructures, and ensure youth voice with racial, geographic, and other diverse types of youth representation;
- provide recommendations to ensure that a racial equity approach and an inclusion-based framework is embedded in the youth development strategy at DCYF; and
- make recommendations on the creation of a children's cabinet that would facilitate cross-agency coordination, and program and policy development with a common mission to measurably improve the well-being of Washington's children, youth, and families through evidence-based practices and strengthen families through evidence-based practices and strength-based approaches to positive child and youth development.

Work Group Members. The youth development work group is comprised of twenty-eight members, nineteen of which are voting members. To ensure racial and geographic diversity by reflecting the demographics of impacted youth populations, DCYF is to appoint fifteen voting members including:

- a DCYF representative;

- an OSPI representative;
- two representatives for youth currently in a youth development or expanded learning program representing geographic, racial, or other diversity;
- a parent with a youth in a culturally based organization;
- a culturally based organization that provides youth programming;
- a regional youth development intermediary;
- an expanded learning opportunities or youth development provider;
- a school-age child care provider;
- a statewide mentoring provider;
- a local public youth development funder;
- a local private youth development funder;
- a representative from the office of the superintendent of public instruction special education advisory council;
- a kinship care representative; and
- a tribal representative.

The youth development work group must include four voting members who represent the Legislature. The president of the Senate shall appoint one member from each of the largest caucuses of the Senate. The Speaker of the House of Representatives shall appoint one member from each of the largest caucuses of the House of Representatives.

The youth development work group must include nine nonvoting members representing:

- higher education;
- the Department of Commerce;
- the Department of Social and Health Services;
- the Department of Health;
- mental health agencies or advocacy organizations;
- public and low-income housing developments;
- expanded learning opportunities or youth development direct service workers;
- expanded learning opportunity statewide intermediaries; and
- parent stakeholders.

DCYF is provide up to five stipends to cover travel and time for youth development work group members that do not have the resources or job classification to participate in a statewide work group, such as parents and youth.

Staff support for the work group is provided by DCYF.

Reporting Requirements. By December 1st annually, the youth development work group is to submit a report to the Governor and the appropriate committees of the Legislature. The first report is due by December 1, 2019.

In the report, the youth development work group is to provide recommendations that:

- align child and adolescent brain research and research-based best practices;
- sustain early learning gains, support learning and well-being, prevent entry into the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, and support happy, healthy, safe, and thriving children and youth;

- provide guidance for a DCYF system and strategy for supporting prevention and promotion across the five through young adulthood age span, not only to prevent negative outcomes for youth and young adults, but also to increase positive outcomes for them;
- allow for clearer linkages to schools and OSPI as well as breaking down siloes and barriers for youth programming between state departments;
- provide support to youth programming, such as expanded learning opportunities, school-age child care, mentoring, leadership opportunities, and other programs that support positive youth development;
- include working with providers and youth development stakeholders to utilize their knowledge and expertise to formulate recommendations that integrate statewide systems and supports with existing local youth development and engagement programming and systems. Systems include youth programs, local private and public funding, supports for students with disabilities, and other key supports for children and youth; and
- consider whether youth representation should be included in DCYF's Oversight Board.

The provisions of this bill expire December 31, 2021.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 25, 2019.

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: DCYF was created in 2017 after the convening of the Blue Ribbon Task Force which provided recommendations about prevention so kids do not end in foster care, among other things. The idea was that issues relating to children and youth would no longer be siloed. As this agency gets off the ground, youth engagement needs to be part of its blue print. Prevention and promotion of positive engagement and outcomes should not stop at age five, but when kids transition to K-12, they lose all the supports in place for children aged zero to five. We do not want these kids to end up involved in the system, we need to get in early and create opportunities and strategies for positive outcomes. There are a lot of youth out there engaged in intensive services. We can do better. We can also be more thoughtful about how we develop youth policies and engage youth—this work group would provide that vehicle.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Claire Wilson, Prime Sponsor; Rene Murry, Youth Development Executives of King County; David de la Fuente, Communities in Schools of Kent; David Beard, School's Out Washington.

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