

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6511

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As of February 10, 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:** Senators Carlyle, Wilson, C., Hunt, Hasegawa, Nguyen and Zeiger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/03/20, 2/07/20 [DPS-WM, w/ oRec, DNP].

**Ways & Means:** 2/10/20.

**Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill**

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in collaboration with other agencies, to continue convening a work group focused on students in foster care and students experiencing homelessness.
- Assigns certain tasks to the work group including reviewing educational outcomes, engaging stakeholders, and developing recommendations.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6511 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Wilson, C., Vice Chair; Hunt, McCoy, Mullet, Pedersen and Salomon.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Hawkins, Ranking Member; Wagoner.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Holy and Padden.

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*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.*

**Staff:** Ailey Kato (786-7434)

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## SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**Staff:** Kayla Hammer (786-7305)

**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.

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 (ERDC). 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 (First Substitute):** Project Education Impact Work Group. OSPI, in collaboration with DCYF, OHY, and WSAC, must convene the Project Education Impact Work Group. The work group must include aligned nongovernmental agencies and a statewide nonprofit coalition that is representative of communities of color and people living in low-income communities.

The work group must focus on students in foster care, those experiencing homelessness, or both, in prekindergarten through postsecondary. The work group must implement a plan to achieve parity in educational outcomes and to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in educational outcomes with their general student population peers by 2027. "Students in foster care" and "students experiencing homelessness" 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 work group must annually review certain educational outcomes for these students. OSPI, DCYF, WSAC, and OHY must provide updated education and other necessary data to the ERDC. The ERDC must provide a report to the work group on the educational outcomes by March 31, 2021, and annually thereafter. If state funds are not made available, the work group may pursue private funding.

The work group 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.

By October 31, 2020, and biannually thereafter, the work group must submit a report about:

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

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

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

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):**

- Defines "students in foster care" and "students experiencing homelessness" for the purposes of the work group plan.
- Changes "children and youth" to "students."

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill (Early Learning & K-12 Education):** *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Students in foster care and those experiencing homelessness are furthest from opportunity and experience instability, which leads to similar educational outcomes. Disparities get worse over time without adequate supports. This work group is working collaboratively to find places where policies and solutions can be aligned. Additional and consistent help for these students is transformative. The data required in this bill will help identify cross-sector information at different transition points. Work group members are committed to staying at the table to improve educational outcomes, using a racial equity lens, and will provide accountability. This work group should include youth voice.

**Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education):** PRO: Yubi Mamiya, Washington State Legislative Youth Advisory Council; Becky Thompson, Washington Student Achievement Council; Dawn Rains, Treehouse; Katara Jordan, Building Changes;

Peggy Carlson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Juliette Schindler Kelly, College Success Foundation.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education):**  
No one.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony on First Substitute (Ways & Means):** PRO: The current workgroup and Building Changes and Treehouse foundations' goal is to align programs for the two groups; homeless youth, and youth in foster care. Both groups have similar circumstances and educational outcomes. There is work that still needs to be done to create the framework moving forward and this is a small investment for that work.

**Persons Testifying (Ways & Means):** PRO: Katara Jordan, Building Changes.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Ways & Means):** No one.