

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1176

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Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning access to higher education.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Paul, Boehnke, Kloba, Callan, Davis, Dolan, Riccelli, Bergquist, Lekanoff and Shewmake; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges).

**House Committee on Education**  
**Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education**

### **Background:**

#### Property Damage by Students and Associated Penalties.

If school property, or property belonging to a contractor of the school district, an employee, or another student, has been lost or willfully cut, defaced, or injured, the school district may withhold the grades, diploma, and transcripts of the student responsible for the damage or loss until the student or the student's parent or guardian has paid for the damages.

If the student and the student's parent or guardian are unable to pay for the damages, the school district must provide a program of voluntary work for the student in lieu of paying monetary damages. Upon completion of the voluntary work, the student's grades, diploma, and transcripts must be released. The student's parent or guardian is liable for damages as otherwise provided by law.

If the student is suspended, the student may not be readmitted to the school until the student or the student's parent or guardian has made payment in full or until directed by the superintendent of schools.

A student who is suspended for damaging a school district or contracted school bus may not enter any school bus until the student or the student's parent or guardian has paid in full for the damages or until directed by the superintendent.

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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 part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

School districts may not assess penalties on students for damaging or losing school property, or property belonging to a contractor, an employee, or another student, until the board of directors has adopted policies to ensure the protection of students' due process rights.

Enrolling Students in Different Districts—Withholding Transcripts.

If a student who is enrolling in a different school has not paid a fine or fee for damaging or losing school property, or tuition, fees, or fines at an approved private school, the sending school may withhold the student's official transcript. The sending school, however, must transmit information about the student's academic performance, special placement, immunization records, records of disciplinary action, and history of violent behavior or other specified offenses.

If the official transcript is withheld because of unpaid tuition, fees, or fines, the enrolling school must notify the student and parent or guardian that the official transcript will not be sent until the financial obligation is met, and that failure to have an official transcript may result in failure to graduate or exclusion from extracurricular activities.

**Summary:**

Property Damage by Students and Associated Penalties.

School districts may withhold the diplomas, but not the grades or transcripts, of students who are responsible for damaging or losing school property, or property belonging to a contractor of the school district, an employee, or another student.

School and school bus readmittance requirements are modified. Provisions prohibiting school districts from readmitting students who have been suspended for property damage or loss until payment has been made for the damages, or until directed by the superintendent of schools, are repealed. Provisions barring students who have damaged a school district or contracted school bus from entering a school bus until payment has been made for the damages, or until directed by the superintendent, are also repealed.

Terminology changes are made. Statutory references to "pupil" are changed to "student," and references to "voluntary work" are changed to "community service."

Enrolling Students in Different Districts—Withholding Transcripts.

Public and private schools may no longer withhold a transferring student's official transcript due to: an unpaid fine or fee for damaging or losing school property or property belonging to other specified parties; or unpaid tuition, fees, or fines at an approved private school.

Posting Data on Withheld Diplomas.

School districts that withhold diplomas from students because of unpaid penalties for property that was damaged or lost by a student must post information on their websites indicating:

- the number of withheld diplomas, by graduating class, during the previous three school years; and
- the number of students with withheld diplomas who were eligible for free or reduced-price meals during their last two years in the school district.

In publishing this data, school districts must, to the extent practicable, publish the information with other information that districts are required to publish.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

House	77	20	
Senate	25	23	(Senate amended)
House	58	40	(House concurred)

**Effective:** July 25, 2021