
Education Committee

2SHB 2239

Brief Description: Supporting student well-being through instruction in social-emotional skills.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Timmons, Eslick, Callan, Ramel, Reeves, Reed, Doglio, Leavitt and Davis).

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to create a voluntary online survey for parents or guardians to complete upon transferring or withdrawing a student from a public school or school district.
- Requires the survey to be operational by September 1, 2024, and specifies notification and website posting requirements.
- Directs the OSPI to prepare annual summaries of the survey data for designated recipients and to post and maintain those summaries on its website.

Hearing Date:

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In addition to its constitutional charge of supervising all matters pertaining to public schools, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and its office has numerous and broad responsibilities prescribed in statute, including:

- making rules and regulations necessary for the administration of public education

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- requirements;
- preparing courses of study and other materials and books for the discharge of education duties;
- fulfilling financial responsibilities, including distributing legislatively allocated funds to districts for the operation of the public school system, and awarding numerous state and federally funded grants; and
- satisfying numerous reporting and other duties assigned by the legislature.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction tracks student enrollment and related trends. While there are different ways of calculating enrollment, and enrollment totals vary throughout the school year, data from the OSPI indicates that 1.099 million students were enrolled in public schools at the beginning of the 2023-24 year. In comparison, 1.147 million students were enrolled in public schools at the beginning of the 2019-20 school year, the state's highest enrollment total.

Home-Based Instruction.

As an alternative to enrolling students in public or private schools, parents may elect to provide home-based instruction to their school-aged children. Parents providing home-based instruction must comply various statutory provisions, including requirements related to planned and supervised instructional and educational activities, but decisions relating to the curriculum, methods, and other aspects of the education are the responsibility of the parents.

The parent of a child that is receiving home-based instruction must also annually file a signed declaration of intent indicating that the parent is planning to cause the child to receive home-based instruction. The declaration must be filed with the applicable school district superintendent by September 15 of the school year or as otherwise required.

Summary of Bill:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is directed to create an online survey for parents or guardians to complete, at their option, upon transferring or withdrawing a student from a public school or school district. The stated purpose of the survey, which must be operational by September 1, 2024, is to collect data for school officials, policymakers, and the public regarding the reasons that parents or guardians transfer or withdraw students from public schools and school districts.

Public schools must notify parents or guardians of the survey and provide a link to it upon receiving a request from a parent or guardian to transfer or withdraw a student. If a school district maintains a website, the district must post a link to the survey on their website and the homepage for each school within the district. Public schools and school districts are also encouraged make the survey link available through their internet-based communications and other digital and nondigital communications.

A school district superintendent that receives a declaration from a parent indicating their intent to

withdraw the child from a public school, and instead provide for home-based instruction, is required to provide the parents with a link to the survey.

Beginning December 1, 2025, the OSPI must annually provide a summary of the data received through the survey during the previous twelve months to the public schools and school districts from which survey responses originated and the education and fiscal committees of the Legislature. The OSPI must also post and maintain the required data summaries on its website.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 4, 2024.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.