

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5719

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Human Services, February 14, 2023

Title: An act relating to modifying and extending requirements of a work group convened to address the needs of students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or both, by adding reporting and other requirements related to students in or exiting institutional education facilities.

Brief Description: Modifying and extending requirements of a work group convened to address the needs of students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or both.

Sponsors: Senators Hunt, Hawkins and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Human Services: 2/13/23, 2/14/23 [DP-WM].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Adds students in or exiting Juvenile Rehabilitation facilities to the scope and duties of the work group focused on increasing equitable educational outcomes for students in foster care and experiencing homelessness.
- Adds representation from the education data center to the work group and requires meaningful consultation from youth and young adults with lived experience in foster care, homelessness, and juvenile rehabilitation.
- Extends several annual reporting requirements to 2027, and extends the final report date for the work group to July 1, 2028.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wilson, C., Chair; Kauffman, Vice Chair; Boehnke, Ranking Member; Frame, Nguyen, Warnick and Wilson, J..

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.

Staff: Kelsey-anne Fung (786-7479)

Background: Foster Care and Homeless Children and Youth 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 charge of the work group was to create a plan for children and youth in foster care or experiencing homelessness to facilitate educational equity and close racial and ethnic disparities by 2027. A report was submitted in January 2019.

Education Research and Data Center. The Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) is housed within the Office of Financial Management and maintains the state's preschool to grade 20 to workforce longitudinal data system, known as the P20W warehouse. ERDC also houses financial aid data and apprenticeship data. ERDC links education and workforce data from multiple state agencies through an identity matching process, and works with the education research community to fulfill data requests, create dashboards, and conduct research to better understand the education systems in the state.

Work Group to Increase Equitable Educational Outcomes for Foster Care and Homeless Children and Youth. In 2020, the Legislature directed OSPI, in collaboration with DCYF, OHY, and WSAC, to convene a work group to address the needs of students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or both. The work group must include representatives of nongovernmental agencies, the Education Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, and four legislative members with experience in issues of education, the foster care system, and homeless youth.

The work group must develop recommendations to promote parity in educational outcomes and eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in education outcomes for students in foster care, experiencing homelessness, or both. The work group must review and evaluate certain education outcomes and engage specified stakeholders to provide input on recommendations.

To assist the work group in the completion of its duties, OSPI, DCYF, WSAC, and OHY must provide updated education and other necessary data to the ERDC. ERDC must provide annual reports to the work group regarding certain education outcomes by March 31, 2021, 2022, and 2023.

The work group must submit annual reports to the Governor, Legislature, and the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee by October 31, 2021, 2022, and 2023 with certain information, and a final report by July 1, 2024.

Juvenile Rehabilitation Institutions. When a juvenile court sentences a juvenile offender to local sanctions, the court must impose a determinate sentence within the standard range.

Confinement imposed by a juvenile court up to 30 days is served in a county juvenile detention facility. Any confinement imposed that is greater than 30 days is served through commitment at a DCYF Juvenile Rehabilitation facility.

DCYF's Juvenile Rehabilitation Division operates three juvenile institutions for juveniles convicted of crimes and sentenced to more than 30 days of confinement. Echo Glen Children's Center in Snoqualmie serves younger male offenders as well as female offenders. Green Hill School in Chehalis serves older male offenders. The Naselle Youth Camp serves male offenders and offers a forestry work program. In 2022, the Legislature directed DCYF to discontinue youth placements at Naselle Youth Camp.

Summary of Bill: Students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities are added to the scope and charge of the work group, in addition to students in foster care and experiencing homelessness. Duties of the work group are modified to include students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities, such as reviewing and evaluating education outcomes of students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities, identifying whether the state has made progress in achieving education parity for students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities, and engaging students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities for input on the development of recommendations.

Representation from the Education Data Center is added to the work group. The work group must include meaningful consultation with youth and young adults who have lived experience in foster care, homelessness, and juvenile rehabilitation.

The experience required for the four legislative members is altered to include issues of juvenile rehabilitation and child welfare, in addition to education and homeless youth.

Several reporting requirements are extended. Annual reports with certain information must be submitted to the Governor, Legislature, and the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee until 2027. Reports from the Education Data Center regarding specified education outcomes must be provided to the work group by August 31, 2023, and annually until 2027. The due date for the work group's final report is extended from July 1, 2024 to July 1, 2028.

Students in foster care means students who are the subject of a dependency proceeding. Students experiencing homelessness means students without a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence in accordance with federal law. Students in or exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities means youth who are under the age of 21, are current or former residents of institutional education facilities, and are eligible but not enrolled in a school or receiving basic education services.

The expiration date for the act is extended from December 31, 2024, to December 31, 2028.

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: PRO: The bill continues the work group's focus on the most marginalized, vulnerable youth groups by including students in and exiting juvenile rehabilitation facilities in the scope of its work. The work group has already yielded results in breaking down silos and coordinating efforts, programs, and services across agencies to better address the education needs of foster care students and students experiencing homelessness. This bill will enable the work group's progress to continue and extends the work until 2028. Marginalized student populations are often impacted by multiple systems, and Washington is the only state attempting to address the needs of this student population together. There is a lot of crossover between these student populations, and this bill creates a framework for sustainability and shared accountability.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Sam Hunt, Prime Sponsor; Annie Blackledge, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Annie Blackledge, OSPI; Dawn Rains, Treehouse; Megan Veith, Building Changes; Annie Blackledge, OSPI; Sarah Brady, Childcare Resources.

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