

RCW 28A.175.100 Statewide dropout reengagement program. (1)

This section and RCW 28A.175.105 through 28A.175.115 provide a statutory framework for a statewide dropout reengagement system to provide appropriate educational opportunities and access to services for students age sixteen to twenty-one who have dropped out of high school or are not accumulating sufficient credits to reasonably complete a high school diploma in a public school before the age of twenty-one.

(2) Under the system, school districts may:

(a) Enter into the model interlocal agreement developed under RCW 28A.175.110 with an educational service district, community or technical college, or other public entity to provide a dropout reengagement program for eligible students of the district; or

(b) Enter into the model contract developed under RCW 28A.175.110 with a community-based organization to provide a dropout reengagement program for eligible students of the district.

(3) If a school district does not enter an interlocal agreement or contract with an educational service district, community or technical college, other public entity, or community-based organization to provide a dropout reengagement program for eligible students residing in the district, the educational service district, community or technical college, other public entity, or community-based organization may petition a school district other than the resident school district to enroll the eligible students under RCW 28A.225.220 through 28A.225.230 and enter the interlocal agreement or contract with the petitioning entity to provide a dropout reengagement program for the eligible students.

(4) This section does not affect the authority of school districts to contract for educational services under RCW 28A.150.305 and 28A.320.035. This section also does not affect the authority of school districts to offer dropout reengagement programs or other educational services for eligible students directly. [2010 c 20 s 2.]

Intent—2013 c 39; 2010 c 20: "(1) In every school district there are older youth who have become disengaged with the traditional education program of public high schools. They may have failed multiple classes and are far behind in accumulating credits to graduate. They do not see a high school diploma as an achievable goal. They may have dropped out of school entirely. They are not likely to become reengaged in their education by the prospect of reenrollment in a traditional or even an alternative high school.

(2) For many years, school districts, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations have created partnerships to provide appropriate educational programs for these students. Programs such as career education options and career link have successfully offered individualized academic instruction, case management support, and career-oriented skills in an age-appropriate learning environment to hundreds of disengaged older youth. Preparation for a test to earn a high school equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536 in accordance with rules adopted under RCW 28A.305.190 is provided but is not the end goal for students.

(3) However, in recent years, many of these partnerships have ceased to operate. The laws and rules authorizing school districts to contract using basic education allocations do not provide sufficient guidance and instead present barriers. Program providers are forced to adapt to rules that were not written to address the needs of the

students being served. Questions and concerns about liability, responsibility, and administrative burden have caused districts reluctantly to abandon their partnerships, and consequently leave hundreds of students without a viable alternative for continuing their public education.

(4) Therefore the legislature intends to provide a statutory framework to support a statewide dropout reengagement system for older youth. The framework clarifies and standardizes funding, programs, and administration by directing the office of the superintendent of public instruction to develop model contracts and interlocal agreements. It is the legislature's intent to encourage school districts, community and technical colleges, and community-based organizations to participate in this system and provide appropriate instruction and services to reengage older students and help them make progress toward a meaningful credential and career skills." [2013 c 39 s 4; 2010 c 20 s 1.]