

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2797

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to education of juvenile offenders.

Brief Description: Creating a juvenile offender education task force.

Sponsors: Representatives G. Cole, Moak, Wineberry, Leonard, Holm, Conway, Karahalios and Cothorn.

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 4, 1994, DPS.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 12 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; G. Cole; Eide; G. Fisher; Holm; Jones; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt and Roland.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Brough, Ranking Minority Member; B. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; Carlson; Hansen; Stevens and L. Thomas.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: Local school districts provide the education program in state-operated juvenile delinquent institutions. State statutes provide minimum requirements that must be included in the education program, and require the school districts to negotiate a contract with the Department of Social and Health Services.

Funding for institutional education is included in the state budget and appropriated to the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI). The superintendent then appropriates funds to the school districts. Approximately \$8,600 per student was appropriated for the 1993-94 school year.

In 1989, the Legislature mandated that SPI conduct a study of institutional education programs. SPI established a multi-interest task force. In November 1990, the task force

concluded that major changes are needed in the delivery of institutional education programs. A major recommendation was to establish a single entity to provide education programs in all of the institutions, which would reduce the "fragmented" administrative system currently in place.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The Legislature intends to consolidate responsibility into one entity for the provision of educational services for juvenile offenders in the custody of the Department of Social and Health Services. It is the intent of the Legislature to implement this change beginning with the 1995-96 school year.

To this end, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is directed to establish a Juvenile Offender Education Task Force. Membership on the task force is specified.

The task force is to develop recommendations on the type of education program that should be provided in these institutions, what qualifications should be required of staff, what single administrative structure should be used, and the appropriate funding level for the education program in these institutions.

The task force recommendations are to be submitted by December 1, 1994, to the Legislature, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the secretary of the Department of Social and Health Services.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The focus of the task force was narrowed, the membership was expanded, and several technical changes were made.

Fiscal Note: Requested January 24, 1994.

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

Testimony For: It is essential that these youth receive a quality education. Currently, authority for the education programs in our institutions is too diverse: a single advocate is needed.

Testimony Against: None.

Witnesses: Representative Cole (Prime Sponsor); Pat Hanson, Department of Social and Health Services (pro); Susan Patrick, Superintendent of Public Instruction (pro); and Judy Hartman, Washington Education Association (concerns).