

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**HOUSE BILL 1834**

Chapter 31, Laws of 2022

67th Legislature  
2022 Regular Session

STUDENT EXCUSED ABSENCES—MENTAL HEALTH

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 9, 2022

Passed by the House February 2, 2022  
Yeas 96 Nays 0

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LAURIE JINKINS

**Speaker of the House of  
Representatives**

Passed by the Senate March 1, 2022  
Yeas 48 Nays 0

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DENNY HECK

**President of the Senate**

Approved March 11, 2022 10:27 AM

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JAY INSLEE

**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **HOUSE BILL 1834** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

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BERNARD DEAN

**Chief Clerk**

FILED

March 11, 2022

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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HOUSE BILL 1834

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Passed Legislature - 2022 Regular Session

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Callan, Rude, J. Johnson, Davis, Macri, Ramos, Rule, Santos, Senn, Paul, Simmons, Bergquist, Thai, Stonier, Riccelli, Frame, and Harris-Talley

Prefiled 01/07/22. Read first time 01/10/22. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to student excused absences for mental health  
2 reasons; amending RCW 28A.300.046; and creating a new section.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** After hearing from youth across the state  
5 of Washington, the legislature recognizes that students' mental  
6 health is a component of their physical health and that students'  
7 mental health can affect their ability to learn. The legislature  
8 finds that school districts are not consistently recognizing student  
9 absences for mental health reasons as excused absences. Therefore,  
10 the legislature intends to require that student absences for mental  
11 health reasons be categorized as excused absences.

12 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.300.046 and 2013 2nd sp.s. c 18 s 306 are each  
13 amended to read as follows:

14 (1)(a) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules  
15 establishing a standard definition of student absence from school. By  
16 the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, the rules must categorize  
17 an absence for a mental health reason as an excused absence due to  
18 illness, health condition, or medical appointment.

19 (b) In ~~((adopting the definition))~~ developing the rules, the  
20 superintendent shall review current practices in Washington school

1 districts, definitions used in other states, and any national  
2 standards or definitions used by the national center for education  
3 statistics or other national groups. ~~((The))~~ Prior to filing notice  
4 of the rules under RCW 34.05.320, the superintendent shall ~~((also))~~  
5 consult with the ~~((building bridges work group))~~ graduation: a team  
6 effort partnership advisory committee established under RCW  
7 28A.175.075 and a student advisory group with membership as described  
8 in (c) of this subsection.

9 ~~((b))~~ (c) The superintendent shall develop and publish  
10 guidelines for public schools to implement the definition of student  
11 absence from school adopted under this section. The superintendent  
12 must consider including guidance for schools to integrate their  
13 responses to student excused absences for physical and mental health  
14 into their support systems for student well-being. In developing the  
15 guidelines, the superintendent shall consult with a student advisory  
16 group whose members are directly impacted by student absence rules  
17 and policies and who represent the diversity of the public school  
18 population, including diversity in gender identity, family income,  
19 race and ethnicity, and geography, among other characteristics. The  
20 advisory group must also include a member of the legislative youth  
21 advisory council appointed by the lieutenant governor.

22 (d) Using the definition of student absence adopted under this  
23 section, the superintendent shall establish an indicator for  
24 measuring student attendance in high schools for purposes of the PASS  
25 program under RCW 28A.175.130.

26 (2) (a) The K-12 data governance group under RCW 28A.300.507 shall  
27 establish the parameters and an implementation schedule for statewide  
28 collection through the comprehensive education and data research  
29 system of: (i) Student attendance data using the definitions of  
30 student absence adopted under this section; and (ii) student  
31 discipline data with a focus on suspensions and expulsions from  
32 school.

33 (b) Student suspension and expulsion data collected for the  
34 purposes of this subsection (2) must be:

35 (i) Made publicly available and easily accessible on the  
36 superintendent of public instruction's website; and

37 (ii) Disaggregated and cross-tabulated as established under RCW  
38 28A.300.042.

39 (c) School districts must collect and submit student attendance  
40 data and student discipline data for high school students through the

1 comprehensive education and data research system for purposes of the  
2 PASS program under RCW 28A.175.130 beginning in the 2012-13 school  
3 year.

Passed by the House February 2, 2022.  
Passed by the Senate March 1, 2022.  
Approved by the Governor March 11, 2022.  
Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 11, 2022.

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