

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 2373

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, February 26, 2014

Title: An act relating to improving educational outcomes for homeless students.

Brief Description: Enacting provisions to improve educational outcomes for homeless students.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Parker, Lytton, Stonier, Dahlquist, Seaquist, Zeiger, Santos, Farrell, Pettigrew, Kagi, Bergquist, Walsh, Pollet, Fey, Ryu, Roberts, Cody, Gregerson, Orwall, Haler, S. Hunt, Tarleton, Freeman, Walkinshaw, Muri and Habib).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/14/14, 92-4.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/19/14, 2/26/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Staff: Katherine Taylor (786-7434)

Background: The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is the primary agency charged with overseeing K-12 public education in Washington State. OSPI works with the state's 295 school districts.

OSPI has a brochure for parents posted on its website that explains the educational rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness and informs parents about ways in which they can support their children's education during times of homelessness. The brochure was created by the National Center for Homeless Education.

According to OSPI, Washington school districts reported a total of 27,390 homeless students enrolled in school during the 2011-12 school year.

Summary of Bill: OSPI must report data on homeless students to the Governor and the Legislature beginning January 10, 2015, and each odd-numbered year thereafter. This report

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should be disaggregated by subgroups of students, at both the state and district level, and include the following:

- the number of identified homeless students enrolled in public schools;
- the number of students participating in the Learning Assistance Program, the Highly Capable Program, and the Running Start Program; and
- the academic performance and educational outcomes of homeless students.

In the annual report to OSPI, school districts must report dropout rates for identified homeless students in grades seven through 12, in addition to the previously required data.

By July 1, 2014, OSPI must adopt and distribute to each school district best practices for choosing and training school district-designated homeless student liaisons.

OSPI, in collaboration with community experts on homelessness and homeless education policy, must develop or acquire a short video to be posted on OSPI's website. The video must provide information on identifying and providing support to homeless students, and why these activities are critical to student success.

School districts must strongly encourage an all-school staff review of the video annually, and a state training for the district-designated homeless student liaison. The school districts must include in existing materials shared with students, at the beginning of the school year or at enrollment, information about services and support for homeless students. School districts may use the brochure posted on OSPI's website and are strongly encouraged to use a variety of communications each year.

There is a null and void provision.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This will improve identification of homeless students in school and get them more resources.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Chris Jordan, University of WA School of Law; Sherry Krainick, WA State Parent Teacher Assn., Legislative Director.