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**HOUSE BILL 1999**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Carlyle, Kagi, Lytton, Walsh, Sawyer, Pettigrew, Ortiz-Self, Dent, Parker, Caldier, Goodman, and Jinkins

AN ACT Relating to coordinating services and programs for foster youth in order to improve educational outcomes; amending RCW 28B.117.060; adding new sections to chapter 28A.300 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 74.13 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28B.77 RCW; creating a new section; recodifying RCW 28B.117.060; and repealing RCW 74.13.105.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The Washington state legislature has long acknowledged that youth impacted by the foster care system experience among the worst high school graduation and postsecondary completion outcomes compared to any other population of youth. Over the last decade, legislative leadership has sparked innovation and development of an array of services to improve educational outcomes. The legislature intends to powerfully leverage that past experience to establish a set of comprehensive strategies that are evidence-based, more coordinated, intensive, and intentional in order to proactively support youth to complete high school and successfully implement their own plans for their future.

The goals of this effort are threefold:

(1) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care graduation rates;

(2) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care enrollment in postsecondary education; and

(3) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care postsecondary completion.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.300 RCW to read as follows:

(1) To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must contract with at least one nongovernmental entity to administer a program of education coordination for youth, kindergarten through twelfth grade, who are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW. The selected nongovernmental entity or entities must engage in a public-private partnership with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and are responsible for raising a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration, and evaluation.

(2) The nongovernmental entity or entities selected by the office of the superintendent of public instruction must have demonstrated success in working with foster care youth and assisting foster care youth in receiving appropriate educational services, including enrollment, accessing school-based services, reducing out-of-school discipline interventions, and attaining high school graduation. The contract must be outcome driven with a stated goal of reducing educational barriers to youth success.

(3) The selected nongovernmental entity or entities must provide services to support individual youth upon a referral by a social worker with the department of social and health services, school staff, or a nongovernmental agency. The selected nongovernmental entity or entities must be colocated in the offices of the department of social and health services to provide timely consultation and in-service training. These entities must have access to all paper and electronic education records and case information pertinent to the educational planning and services of youth referred and are subject to RCW 13.50.010 and 13.50.100.

(4) The selected nongovernmental entity or entities must report outcomes semiannually to the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of social and health services.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.300 RCW to read as follows:

(1) To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must contract with at least one nongovernmental entity to improve the educational outcomes of students at two sites by providing individualized education services and monitoring and supporting dependent youths' completion of educational milestones, remediation needs, and special education needs. The selected nongovernmental entity must engage in a public-private partnership with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and is responsible for raising a portion of the funds needed for service delivery, administration, and evaluation.

(2) One of the sites shall be the site previously selected by the department of social and health services pursuant to the 2013-2015 omnibus appropriations act, section 202(10), chapter 4, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess. The office of the superintendent of public instruction and the nongovernmental entity or entities at the original site shall consult with the department of social and health services and then collaboratively select the second site. This site should be a school district or group of school districts with a significant number of students who are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW. The second site established under this subsection must be selected by September 1, 2015.

(3) The purpose of the programs at both sites is to improve the educational outcomes of students who are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW by providing individualized education services and supporting dependent youths' completion of educational milestones, remediation needs, and special education needs.

(4) The entity or entities at these sites must facilitate the educational progress, high school completion, and postsecondary plan initiation of eligible youth. The contract with the entity or entities must be outcome driven with a stated goal of improving the graduation rates and postsecondary plan initiation of foster youth by two percent per year over five school year periods. The baseline for measurement for the existing site was established in the 2013-14 school year, and this baseline remains applicable through the 2018-19 school year. Any new site must establish its baseline at the end of the first year of service provision, and this baseline must remain applicable for the next five school year periods.

(5) Services provided by the nongovernmental entity or entities must include:

(a) Advocacy for foster youth to eliminate barriers to educational access and success;

(b) Consultation with schools and the department of social and health services' case workers to develop educational plans for and with participating youth;

(c) Monitoring education progress and providing interventions to improve attendance, behavior, and course performance of participating youth;

(d) Facilitating age-specific developmental and logistical tasks to be accomplished for high school and postsecondary success;

(e) Facilitating the participation of youth with school and local resources that may assist in educational access and success; and

(f) Coordinating youth, caregivers, schools, and social workers to advocate to support youth progress in the educational system.

(6) The contracted nongovernmental entity or entities must report site outcomes to the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of social and health services semiannually.

(7) The department of social and health services children's administration must proactively refer all eligible youth, within the site area, to the selected nongovernmental entity for educational services. Youth eligible for referral are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW, are not currently served by services under RCW 28B.117.060 (as recodified by this act), are age thirteen through twenty-one years of age, and remain eligible for continuing service following fulfillment of the permanent plan and through initiation of a postsecondary plan. After high school completion, services are concluded within a time period specified in the contract to pursue engagement of continuing postsecondary support services provided by local schools, higher education, community programs, or the passport to college promise program.

(8) The selected nongovernmental entity or entities may be colocated in the offices of the department of social and health services to provide timely consultation. These entities must be provided access to all paper and electronic education records and case information pertinent to the educational planning and services of youth referred and are subject to RCW 13.50.010 and 13.50.100.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.117.060 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 224 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) To the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, ((~~the department of social and health services~~))council, with input from the ((~~state board for community and technical colleges, the office, and institutions of higher education~~))office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of social and health services, shall contract with at least one nongovernmental entity ((~~through a request for proposals process~~)) to develop, implement, and administer a program of supplemental educational transition planning for youth in foster care in Washington state.

(2) The nongovernmental entity or entities chosen by the ((~~department~~))council shall have demonstrated success in working with foster care youth and assisting foster care youth in successfully making the transition from ((~~foster care to independent adulthood~~))high school to a postsecondary plan, including postsecondary enrollment, career, or service.

(3) The selected nongovernmental entity or entities shall provide supplemental educational transition planning to foster care youth in Washington state ((~~beginning at age fourteen and then at least every six months thereafter~~)). Youth eligible for referral are not currently served by programs under section 3 of this act, dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW, age thirteen through twenty-one, and remain eligible for continuing service following fulfillment of the permanent plan and through initiation of a postsecondary plan. After high school completion, services are concluded within a time period specified in the contract to pursue engagement of continuing postsecondary support services provided by local schools, higher education, community programs, or the passport to college promise program. The nongovernmental entity or entities must facilitate the educational progress, graduation, and postsecondary plan initiation of eligible youth. The contract must be outcome driven with a stated goal of improving the graduation rates and postsecondary plan initiation of eligible youth by two percent per year over five school year periods starting with the 2015-16 school year and ending with the 2020-21 school year. With each new contract, a baseline must be established at the end of the first year of service provision.

(4) The supplemental transition planning shall include:

(a) ((~~Comprehensive information regarding postsecondary educational opportunities including, but not limited to, sources of financial aid, institutional characteristics and record of support for former foster care youth, transportation, housing, and other logistical considerations;~~

~~(b) How and when to apply to postsecondary educational programs;~~

~~(c) What precollege tests, if any, the particular foster care youth should take based on his or her postsecondary plans and when to take the tests;~~

~~(d) What courses to take to prepare the particular foster care youth to succeed at his or her postsecondary plans;~~

~~(e) Social, community, educational, logistical, and other issues that frequently impact college students and their success rates; and~~

~~(f) Which web sites, nongovernmental entities, public agencies, and other foster care youth support providers specialize in which services~~))Consultation with schools and the department of social and health services' case workers to develop educational plans for and with participating youth;

(b) Age-specific developmental and logistical tasks to be accomplished for high school and postsecondary success;

(c) Facilitating youth participation with appropriate school and local resources that may assist in educational access and success; and

(d) Coordinating youth, caregivers, schools, and social workers to support youth progress in the educational system.

((~~(4)~~))(5) The selected nongovernmental entity or entities ((~~shall work directly with the school counselors at the foster care youths' high schools to ensure that a consistent and complete transition plan has been prepared for each foster care youth who emancipates out of the foster care system in Washington state~~))may be colocated in the offices of the department of social and health services to provide timely consultation. These entities must have access to all paper and electronic education records and case information pertinent to the educational planning and services of youth referred and are subject to RCW 13.50.010 and 13.50.100.

(6) The contracted nongovernmental entity or entities must report outcomes to the council and the department of social and health services semiannually.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 74.13 RCW to read as follows:

(1) In order to proactively support foster youth to complete high school, enroll and complete postsecondary education, and successfully implement their own plans for their futures, the department, the student achievement council, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall enter into, or revise existing, memoranda of understanding that:

(a) Facilitate student referral, data and information exchange, agency roles and responsibilities, and cooperation and collaboration among state agencies and nongovernmental entities; and

(b) Effectuate the transfer of responsibilities from the department of social and health services to the office of the superintendent of public instruction with respect to the programs in sections 2 and 3 of this act, and from the department of social and health services to the student achievement council with respect to the program in RCW 28B.117.060 (as recodified by this act) in a smooth, expedient, and coordinated fashion.

(2) By November 1, 2016, and biannually thereafter, the department, the student achievement council, and the office of the superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with the nongovernmental entities engaged in public-private partnerships shall submit a joint report to the governor and the appropriate education and human services committees of the legislature regarding each of these programs, individually, as well as the collective progress the state has made toward the following goals:

(a) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care graduation rates;

(b) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care enrollment in postsecondary education; and

(c) To make Washington number one in the nation for foster care postsecondary completion.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 74.13.105 (Program of education coordination for dependent youth—Public-private partnership—Selection—Report) and 2012 c 163 s 6 are each repealed.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  RCW 28B.117.060 is recodified as a section in chapter 28B.77 RCW.

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