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## Early Learning & Human Services Committee

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### HB 2670

**Brief Description:** Providing services and supports to pregnant and parenting minors to improve educational attainment.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kilduff, Muri, Stonier, Stambaugh, Sawyer, Kagi, Sells, Reeves, Ormsby, Jinkins, Santos, Bergquist, Doglio, McBride, Ortiz-Self, Stanford and Pollet.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows a minor who is pregnant or a parent to receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families regardless of income or resources.
- Requires authorization for full-day Working Connections Child Care during the school year for a minor parent meeting education requirements.
- Establishes grants to school districts for Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills programs.
- Requires school districts to provide transportation for parenting students who are transporting an infant

**Hearing Date:** 1/26/18

**Staff:** Dawn Eychaner (786-7135).

#### **Background:**

##### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is a federal block grant that provides temporary cash assistance, subsidized childcare, and work programs for low-income families.

In order to receive TANF, a minor who is pregnant or a parent, and who has not been emancipated by a court, must meet program eligibility requirements including:

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- making satisfactory progress in a training program leading to a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate, unless the minor has an infant less than 12 weeks old living in the home;
- living in a situation approved by the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS); and
- having a protective payee set up by the DSHS. A protective payee is a person who manages the client's cash benefits to provide for basic needs. The protective payee may be a DSHS employee or another person selected by the DSHS.

If a minor parent lives with a parent or guardian, the income of the parent or guardian is counted when determining the minor's eligibility. If a minor is applying for benefits separately for themselves and their child, only a portion of the parent or guardian's income is considered when determining financial eligibility.

If a minor does not meet the eligibility requirements, the minor's child may still be eligible for a child-only TANF grant if the household meets all other eligibility criteria.

#### Working Connections Child Care.

The Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) program is a subsidized child care program administered by the Department of Early Learning and the DSHS. To receive authorizations for 12 months of child care subsidy, eligible families must have household incomes at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Depending on income and household size, the consumer may be required to pay a copayment to their child care provider. A consumer pays the minimum copayment when he or she is a minor parent and is either a TANF recipient or part of his or her parent or relative's TANF assistance unit. The minimum copayment is \$15 per month.

The DSHS must prioritize certain groups for WCCC program services. Included as priority groups are families applying for or receiving TANF and minor parents who are full-time students attending high school where there is a school-sponsored on-site child care center and the minor parent is not living with a parent or guardian.

Both parents, if living in the household, must be working or participating in a DSHS-approved activity. For a minor, approved activities may include satisfactory attendance at a high school or a high school equivalency program. Eligible consumers who participate in 110 hours or more of approved activities per month are authorized for full-day or half-day child care, depending upon the age of the child in care. A non-school age child is eligible for full time care.

#### Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills.

Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills (GRADS) programs are available for pregnant and parenting students in 23 school districts in Washington. The GRADS curriculum is set by the school district and must be based on standards set by the National Association of State Administrators of Family and Consumer Sciences that are intended to prepare students for family and work life.

In 2014 Washington received a federal grant from the Office of Adolescent Health of \$6 million over four years for GRADS program implementation, teacher training and support, and other

program components. In 2016 the Washington Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) published an outcome evaluation and benefit-cost analysis for the GRADS program that estimated the net per-student cost to provide GRADS at \$7,588 and a per-student benefit of \$22,839, for a benefit-cost ratio of approximately \$3 to \$1.

#### School District Transportation.

School districts may provide for the transportation of school children and school employees using school buses and drivers hired by the district, commercially-chartered bus services, or through a pupil transportation services contract with a private nongovernmental entity. School districts may, when approved by the superintendent of the educational service district, approve payment for individual transportation arrangements for an eligible student.

Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS) adopted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration regulate motor vehicle restraint systems for children as well as safety requirements for school buses. The FMVSS require small school buses and school-chartered buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 10,000 pounds or less to have lap/shoulder seat belt assemblies. For large school busses with a GVWR of more than 10,000 pounds, seat belts are not required under federal rules.

State law requires children under the age of eight be restrained in a child passenger restraint system meeting the FMVSS when being transported in a motor vehicle that is required to be equipped with passenger seatbelts. This requirement does not apply to school buses.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families.

A minor who is pregnant or a parent may receive TANF regardless of the applicant's income or available resources. The minor must be actively progressing toward meeting education requirements. If the minor lives with a parent or guardian who is not receiving TANF, the income and resources of the parent or guardian of the minor may not be considered when determining eligibility.

##### Working Connections Child Care.

Within existing resources, the DSHS must authorize full-day WCCC during the school year for a minor parent who is attending high school or working toward completing a GED. The minor must participate in the approved activity for 110 hours each month. When determining eligibility, the DSHS may not consider the employment status of the minor parent or the other biological parent. The DSHS may not require the minor parent to pay a copayment greater than the minimum established in rule for the program.

##### Assistance Unit for Minor Parents.

An assistance unit for minor parents is established within the DSHS. The unit must:

- assist minor parents with accessing public services for which they may be eligible;
- develop coordinated case management plans with other state and local agencies serving this population;
- provide case management for minor parents; and

- consult at least annually with the GRADS program staff at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to determine program effectiveness and identify service delivery improvements.

Graduation, Reality, and Dual-Roles Skills.

Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the OSPI must award competitive grants to school districts for establishing a GRADS program. Grant awards must be used for start-up costs for opening a child care center on school premises, GRADS program staff salaries, support group facilitation, mentoring, or other GRADS operation expenses.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) must evaluate the effectiveness of the GRADS grants, conduct a cost-benefit analysis, and assess student outcomes five years after the students' participation. The WSIPP must report these outcomes to the Governor and Legislature by December 1, 2025.

School District Transportation.

By July 1, 2020, at the request of an eligible student, a school district may allow the student to transport an infant on a school bus or other district transportation. The infant must be transported in a rear-facing child restraint system.

If the district denies a student request to transport the infant by bus, the district must authorize other arrangements for the student's transportation. The term "eligible student" includes students served by the transportation program of a school district or compensated for individual transportation arrangements whose route stop is outside the walk area for a student's school.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 16, 2018.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.