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ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6223

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

**By** Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Carlyle, O'Ban, Walsh, Frockt, Darneille, Zeiger, Palumbo, Hunt, Kuderer, Wellman, and Lias)

READ FIRST TIME 02/01/18.

1 AN ACT Relating to equitable educational outcomes for vulnerable  
2 children and youth from preschool to postsecondary education;  
3 creating new sections; providing an effective date; and providing an  
4 expiration date.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature intends with this act to  
7 powerfully leverage current collaboration and investments to align  
8 services, outcome measures, accountability, and resources to  
9 facilitate educational equity by 2027 for children and youth in  
10 foster care and children and youth experiencing homelessness. The  
11 goal of this effort is that children and youth in foster care and  
12 children and youth experiencing homelessness achieve educational  
13 outcomes at the same rate as their general student population peers  
14 throughout the educational continuum from preschool to postsecondary  
15 education.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) For the purposes of this section,  
17 "children and youth in foster care" means children and youth under  
18 the placement and care authority of the department of children,  
19 youth, and families, a federally recognized tribe, or another child-

1 placing agency; and children and youth who have experienced foster  
2 care and have achieved permanency.

3 (2) The department of children, youth, and families, the office  
4 of the superintendent of public instruction, the department of  
5 commerce office of homeless youth prevention and protection programs,  
6 and the student achievement council must convene a work group with  
7 aligned nongovernmental agencies, including a statewide nonprofit  
8 coalition that is representative of communities of color and low-  
9 income communities focused on educational equity, to create a plan  
10 for children and youth in foster care and children and youth  
11 experiencing homelessness to facilitate educational equity with their  
12 general student population peers and to close the disparities between  
13 racial and ethnic groups by 2027. The work group must:

14 (a) Review the educational outcomes of children and youth in  
15 foster care and children and youth experiencing homelessness,  
16 including:

17 (i) Kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, school  
18 stability, high school completion, postsecondary enrollment, and  
19 postsecondary completion; and

20 (ii) Disaggregated data by race and ethnicity;

21 (b) Consider the outcomes, needs, and services for children and  
22 youth in foster care and children and youth experiencing  
23 homelessness, and the specific needs of children and youth of color  
24 and those with special education needs;

25 (c) Map current education support services, including  
26 eligibility, service levels, service providers, outcomes, service  
27 coordination, data sharing, and overall successes and challenges;

28 (d) Engage stakeholders in participating in the analysis and  
29 development of recommendations, including foster youth and children  
30 and youth experiencing homelessness, foster parents and relative  
31 caregivers, birth parents, caseworkers, school districts and  
32 educators, early learning providers, postsecondary education  
33 advocates, and federally recognized tribes;

34 (e) Make recommendations for an optimal continuum of education  
35 support services to foster and homeless children and youth from  
36 preschool to postsecondary education that would provide for shared  
37 and sustainable accountability to reach the goal of educational  
38 parity, including recommendations to:

39 (i) Align indicators and outcomes across organizations and  
40 programs;

1 (ii) Improve racial and ethnic equity in educational outcomes;  
2 (iii) Ensure access to consistent and accurate annual educational  
3 outcomes data;  
4 (iv) Address system barriers such as data sharing;  
5 (v) Detail options for governance and oversight to ensure  
6 educational services are continually available to foster and homeless  
7 children and youth regardless of status;  
8 (vi) Detail a support structure that will ensure that educational  
9 records, educational needs, individualized education programs,  
10 credits, and other records will follow children and youth when they  
11 transition from district to district or another educational program  
12 or facility;  
13 (vii) Explore the option of creating a specific statewide school  
14 district that supports the needs of and tracks the educational  
15 progress of children and youth in foster care and children and youth  
16 experiencing homelessness; and  
17 (viii) Identify where opportunities exist to align policy,  
18 practices, and supports for students experiencing homelessness and  
19 foster students; and  
20 (f) Outline which recommendations can be implemented using  
21 existing resources and regulations and which require policy,  
22 administrative, and resource adjustments.  
23 (3) The work group should seek to develop an optimal continuum of  
24 services using research-based program strategies and to provide for  
25 prevention, early intervention, and seamless transitions.  
26 (4) Nothing in this section permits disclosure of confidential  
27 information protected from disclosure under federal or state law,  
28 including but not limited to information protected under chapter  
29 13.50 RCW. Confidential information received by the work group  
30 retains its confidentiality and may not be further disseminated  
31 except as allowed under federal and state law.  
32 (5) By December 17, 2018, the work group must provide a report to  
33 the legislature on its analysis as described under this section, the  
34 recommended plan, and any legislative and administrative changes  
35 needed to facilitate educational equity for children and youth in  
36 foster care and children and youth experiencing homelessness with  
37 their general student population peers by 2027.

38 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act takes effect July 1, 2018.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    This act expires December 31, 2018.

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