

RCW 28A.190.150 Institutional education—Delivery and oversight—Duty of superintendent of public instruction. Beginning September 1, 2027, the superintendent of public instruction is responsible for the delivery and oversight of basic education services to justice-involved students who [who are] under the age of 21 and served through institutional education programs in facilities that are not under the jurisdiction of the department of social and health services or the department of corrections. [2023 c 303 § 5.]

Findings—Intent—2023 c 303: "(1) The legislature finds that students who are served through institutional education programs are constitutionally entitled to full access to the state's statutory program of basic education and its promise of an opportunity to graduate with a meaningful diploma that prepares them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship. Ensuring full access to a foundational education for these students is unquestionably in the best interest of the youth, their families, and society at large.

(2) Legislative actions dedicated to improving the educational circumstances for students receiving services through institutional education programs have been enacted in recent years. In 2021, building upon the efforts of the task force on improving instructional education programs and outcomes established in the previous year, the legislature enacted numerous reforms intended to improve the provision of public education to youth in or released from secure juvenile justice facilities.

(3) Among other requirements, the 2021 legislation directed the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of children, youth, and families to jointly develop recommendations for the establishment, implementation, and funding of a reformed institutional education system that successfully meets the education and support needs of persons in and released from secure settings. The recommendations were to be directed toward meeting the educational needs of persons who are in or have been released from state long-term juvenile institutions and community facilities operated by the department of children, youth, and families, county juvenile detention centers, and facilities of the department of corrections that incarcerate juveniles committed as adults.

(4) The legislature finds that the office of the superintendent of public instruction and the department of children, youth, and families did not sufficiently address legislative directives for reform recommendations.

(5) The legislature, recognizing the ongoing need for systemic reforms to the process by which basic education services are delivered and overseen in secure juvenile justice facilities, intends to initiate the process of assigning the superintendent of public instruction responsibility for the delivery and oversight of basic education services to justice-involved youth served through institutional education programs in facilities that are not under the jurisdiction of the department of social and health services or the department of corrections. The legislature directs that this new program must implement the state's educational duties and goals under RCW 28A.150.210 in a way that better serves the needs of these students.

(6) In centralizing both delivery and oversight of these educational services with the superintendent, the legislature intends

to decisively address essential governance, oversight and accountability, and continuity of education reforms. The legislature intends these reforms to recognize, support, and fully fund the unique educational needs of youth who receive education in these settings. Most importantly, however, the legislature intends for these reforms to provide these students with the opportunity to access the education and supports needed to make life-changing, and life-improving, academic progress." [2023 c 303 § 1.]