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**SENATE BILL 5679**

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

**By** Senators McAuliffe, Litzow, Dammeier, Hasegawa, Liias, Chase, Rolfes, Jayapal, Parlette, and Conway

AN ACT Relating to transition services for special education students; amending RCW 28A.155.220; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that research continues to suggest that high expectations for students with disabilities is paramount to improving student outcomes. The legislature further finds that to increase the number of students with disabilities who are prepared for higher education, teachers and administrators in K-12 education should continue to improve their acceptance of students with disabilities as full-fledged learners for whom there are high expectations. The legislature also encourages continuous development in transition services to higher education opportunities for these students. The legislature recognizes that other states have authorized transition planning to postsecondary settings for students with disabilities as early as the age of fourteen. To remove barriers and obstacles for students with disabilities to access to postsecondary settings including higher education, the legislature intends to authorize transition planning for students with disabilities as early as age fourteen, when age appropriate.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.155.220 and 2014 c 47 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction must establish interagency agreements with the workforce training and education coordinating board, the department of social and health services, the department of services for the blind, and any other state agency that provides high school transition services for special education students. Such interagency agreements shall not interfere with existing individualized education programs, nor override any individualized education program team's decision-making power. The purpose of the interagency agreements is to foster effective collaboration among the multiple agencies providing transition services for individualized education ((~~plan~~))program‑eligible special education students from the beginning of transition planning, which may be as young as age fourteen, through age twenty‑one, or through high school graduation, whichever occurs first. Interagency agreements are also intended to streamline services and programs, promote efficiencies, and establish a uniform focus on improved outcomes related to self-sufficiency. ((~~This subsection does not require transition services plan development in addition to what exists on June 12, 2014.~~))

(2)(a) At age sixteen, or as early as age fourteen if age appropriate, the interagency responsibilities and linkages with transition services under subsection (1) of this section must be addressed in a transition plan to a postsecondary setting in the individualized education program of a student with disabilities.

(b) Transition planning shall be based upon age-appropriate transition assessments that outline the student's individual needs, strengths, preferences, and interests. Transition assessments may include observations, interviews, inventories, situational assessments, formal and informal assessments, as well as academic assessments.

(c) The transition services that the transition plan must address include activities needed to assist the student in reaching postsecondary goals and courses of study to support postsecondary goals.

(d) Transition activities that the transition plan may address include instruction, related services, community experience, employment and other adult living objectives, daily living skills, and functional vocational evaluation.

(e) A discussion should take place with the student and parents, and others as needed, to determine the postsecondary goals or postschool vision for the student. The postsecondary goals included in the transition plan shall be goals that are measurable and must be based on age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and independent living skills, when necessary. The goals must also be based on the student's needs, while considering the strengths, preferences, and interests of the student.

(f) As the student gets older, changes in the transition plan may be noted in the annual update of the student's individualized education program.

(3) To the extent that data is available through data-sharing agreements established by the education data center under RCW 43.41.400, the education data center must monitor the following outcomes for individualized education plan eligible special education students after high school graduation:

(a) The number of students who, within one year of high school graduation:

(i) Enter integrated employment paid at the greater of minimum wage or competitive wage for the type of employment, with access to related employment and health benefits; or

(ii) Enter a postsecondary education or training program focused on leading to integrated employment;

(b) The wages and number of hours worked per pay period;

(c) The impact of employment on any state and federal benefits for individuals with disabilities;

(d) Indicators of the types of settings in which students who previously received transition services primarily reside;

(e) Indicators of improved economic status and self-sufficiency;

(f) Data on those students for whom a postsecondary or integrated employment outcome does not occur within one year of high school graduation, including:

(i) Information on the reasons that the desired outcome has not occurred;

(ii) The number of months the student has not achieved the desired outcome; and

(iii) The efforts made to ensure the student achieves the desired outcome.

((~~(3)~~))(4) To the extent that the data elements in subsection ((~~(2)~~))(3) of this section are available to the education data center through data-sharing agreements, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must prepare an annual report using existing resources and submit the report to the legislature.

**--- END ---**