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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 Liias)

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

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

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) For the purposes of this section, "children and youth in foster care" means children and youth under the placement and care authority of the department of children, youth, and families, a federally recognized tribe, or another child-placing agency; and children and youth who have experienced foster care and have achieved permanency.

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

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

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

(ii) Disaggregated data by race and ethnicity;

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

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

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

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

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

(ii) Improve racial and ethnic equity in educational outcomes;

(iii) Ensure access to consistent and accurate annual educational outcomes data;

(iv) Address system barriers such as data sharing;

(v) Detail options for governance and oversight to ensure educational services are continually available to foster and homeless children and youth regardless of status;

(vi) Detail a support structure that will ensure that educational records, educational needs, individualized education programs, credits, and other records will follow children and youth when they transition from district to district or another educational program or facility;

(vii) Explore the option of creating a specific statewide school district that supports the needs of and tracks the educational progress of children and youth in foster care and children and youth experiencing homelessness; and

(viii) Identify where opportunities exist to align policy, practices, and supports for students experiencing homelessness and foster students; and

(f) Outline which recommendations can be implemented using existing resources and regulations and which require policy, administrative, and resource adjustments.

(3) The work group should seek to develop an optimal continuum of services using research-based program strategies and to provide for prevention, early intervention, and seamless transitions.

(4) Nothing in this section permits disclosure of confidential information protected from disclosure under federal or state law, including but not limited to information protected under chapter 13.50 RCW. Confidential information received by the work group retains its confidentiality and may not be further disseminated except as allowed under federal and state law.

(5) By December 17, 2018, the work group must provide a report to the legislature on its analysis as described under this section, the recommended plan, and any legislative and administrative changes needed to facilitate educational equity for children and youth in foster care and children and youth experiencing homelessness with their general student population peers by 2027.

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

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

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