

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1590

As of March 13, 2023

Title: An act relating to the membership and subcommittees of the oversight board for children, youth, and families.

Brief Description: Concerning the membership and subcommittees of the oversight board for children, youth, and families.

Sponsors: House Committee on Human Services, Youth, & Early Learning (originally sponsored by Representatives Dent, Eslick and Caldier).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/1/23, 96-0.

Committee Activity: Human Services: 3/13/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the membership of the Department of Children, Youth and Families Oversight Board (Oversight Board) to include one subject matter expert on education for youth who are placed in a juvenile facility or are dependent.
- Modifies requirements for certain Oversight Board members.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Staff: Alison Mendiola (786-7488)

Background: Oversight Board. The Oversight Board for the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) was created in 2017, along with DCYF. The Oversight Board is authorized for monitoring and ensuring that DCYF achieves certain outcomes and complies with policies and rules.

The Oversight Board has powers to:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- receive reports of the Office of the Family and Children's Ombuds (OFCO);
- obtain access to relevant records in the possession of the OFCO;
- select its officers and adoption of rules for orderly procedure;
- request investigations by the OFCO of administrative acts;
- request and receive information, outcome data, documents, materials, and records from DCYF relating to children and family welfare, juvenile rehabilitation, juvenile justice, and early learning;
- determine whether DCYF is achieving the performance measures;
- review whether DCYF licensors appropriately and consistently applied agency rules in inspection reports; and
- conduct annual reviews of a sample of DCYF contracts for services from a variety of program and service areas to ensure that those contracts are performance-based.

The Oversight Board consists of 21 members, outlined as follows:

- two Senators and two Members of the House of Representatives from the Legislature, with one member from each major caucus;
- one nonvoting representative from the Office of the Governor;
- one subject matter expert in early learning;
- one subject matter expert in child welfare;
- one subject matter expert in juvenile rehabilitation and justice;
- one subject matter expert in eliminating disparities in child outcomes by family income, race, and ethnicity;
- one tribal representative from west of the crest of the Cascade mountains;
- one tribal representative from east of the crest of the Cascade mountains;
- one current or former foster parent representative;
- one representative of an organization that advocates for the best interest of the child;
- one parent stakeholder group representative;
- one law enforcement representative;
- one child welfare caseworker representative;
- one early childhood learning program implementation practitioner;
- one current or former foster youth under age 25;
- one individual under age 25 with current or previous experience with the juvenile justice system;
- one physician with experience working with children or youth; and
- one judicial representative presiding over child welfare court proceedings or other children's matters.

Nonlegislative members are nominated by the Governor, subject to approval of the appointed legislators and serve four-year terms. When nominating and approving members of the Oversight Board, the Governor and appointed legislators must ensure that at least five of the members reside east of the Cascade Mountain range. The Oversight Board must convene at least two stakeholder meetings per year regarding contracting with DCYF. The Oversight Board must also review surveys of providers, customers, parent groups, and external services to assess whether DCYF is effectively delivering services.

The Oversight Board members must be reimbursed for travel expenses incurred while conducting business of the Oversight Board when authorized by the Oversight Board and within resources allocated for that purposes. Legislative members of the Oversight Board must be reimbursed for travel expenses according to current law.

Summary of Bill: The membership of the Oversight Board is expanded to include one subject matter expert on education for youth who are placed in a juvenile facility or are dependent.

Requirements for certain Oversight Board members are modified, including:

- the representative of an organization that advocates for the best interest of the child can be either a current or recent representative of that organization;
- the representative of foster youth is no longer required to be under age 25 and can be a current or recent foster youth; and
- the representative of the juvenile justice system is no longer required to be under age 25 and can be a person with current or recent experience in the juvenile justice system.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: The oversight board was created along with DCYF. The idea of the oversight board is to oversee the work of DCYF from the 30,000 foot level. Members of the board have specific experience however, capping the age of the current or former foster youth and juvenile justice involved youth at the age of 25 has made it hard to fill these positions, so this bill removes the age limit. The bill also revises language regarding a representative from a youth organization. People may change jobs but their experience doesn't change. It is hard to get good people on the board so we need to do what we can recruit and retain the members the board has.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Tom Dent, Prime Sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.