

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1289

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to assessing and improving the public school system through survey information provided voluntarily by parents and guardians.

**Brief Description:** Gathering survey information to improve the public school system.

**Sponsors:** Representatives McClintock, Santos, Schmidt and Timmons.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 1/23/25, 2/17/25 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Requires the educational service districts (ESDs) to create and publish by September 1, 2025, a voluntary online survey to determine how satisfied the families of current and former students are with the public education system.
- Requires school districts and public schools to share the online survey with families annually.
- Directs the ESDs to share anonymized and disaggregated survey responses with the public schools and school districts from which the responses originated.
- Requires the ESDs to collaborate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to publish a sortable summary of the survey data annually.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass.

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*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.*

Signed by 18 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Shavers, Vice Chair; Rude, Ranking Minority Member; Keaton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Callan, Chase, Couture, Donaghy, Eslick, Marshall, McEntire, Ortiz-Self, Pollet, Reeves, Scott, Steele and Stonier.

**Staff:** Damian Morden-Snipper (786-7296) and Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

**Background:**

Parents or guardians of children enrolled in a Washington public school may transfer their children to another public school or a private school, or they may withdraw their children for home schooling. School districts may request an optional exit interview or questionnaire with the parents or guardians in order to help assess the quality of the district's education program.

School districts are required to collect and submit to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) a statewide student identifier for each student enrolled in or provided services through a class or course. School districts are also required to collect student-level race and ethnicity data, as well the following student categories: low income, highly capable, transitional bilingual, migrant, special education, and section 504.

School districts are required by the OSPI and certain federal programs and regulations to collect data regarding the status of a student's transfer request, including whether confirmation of enrollment in a new school or district has been received. School districts are also required to collect data indicating whether a student's withdrawal was voluntary or involuntary and the reason for a student's withdrawal.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The educational service districts (ESDs) are directed to jointly develop and promote a voluntary online survey to assess the satisfaction of families of current and former students with the public education system, provide opportunities for parents or guardians to share suggestions for improvements, and gather information about why families enroll or disenroll from public schools. The ESDs may create a cooperative through an interlocal agreement to meet this directive.

The survey must be available on at least one website maintained by the ESDs beginning September 1, 2025. The ESDs must distribute a link to the survey to school districts, public schools, and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) every year beginning on September 1, 2025.

The ESDs are directed to share the survey responses, after anonymizing them, with the school district and public school that the associated students were or are enrolled in. In

addition to providing the raw survey data, the ESDs are required to disaggregate the survey responses shared with school districts and schools by certain student groups and subgroups—for example race, gender, and low income—and, when applicable, by the primary reason for the student's disenrollment and whether the parent or guardian: withdrew the student to home school, transferred the student to a private school, transferred the student to a different public school in the same school district, or transferred the student to an out-of-district public school.

The ESDs, in collaboration with the OSPI, must develop and annually update a publicly available summary of the prior year's survey responses, which must be able to be disaggregated by the same categories as described previously and by school district and public school.

Beginning August 1, 2026, school districts and public schools are required to share a link to the survey on their website or in the materials distributed annually to families, students, and employees such as welcome packets and orientation guides.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The substitute bill changes the original bill by:

- revising the purpose language to specify that the survey determine how satisfied the families of current and former students are with the public education system, as well as gather feedback on families' overall experience, suggestions for improvement, and reasons for student enrollment and disenrollment in their local public schools;
- changing the survey respondent to all parents and guardians of public school students;
- allowing the educational service districts (ESDs) to enter into an agreement with one another for joint or cooperative action to create the survey;
- adding a requirement for school districts and public schools to either share a link to the online survey on their websites or in existing materials that are shared annually with families, students, and school employees;
- directing the ESDs to jointly use the statewide student identifiers to assign survey responses to the school district and public school that the associated students are currently or were recently enrolled in, and to anonymize the responses before sharing them with the school districts and public schools;
- adding that the responses received by each public school and school district must be disaggregated by specified student categories and subcategories, such as race, gender, low income, migrant, special education, the primary reason for the student's disenrollment, and by whether the parent or guardian withdrew the student to homeschool, transferred the student to a private school, or transferred the student to a different public school in the same school district or to an out-of-district public school;
- eliminating the report to the legislature; and
- adding that ESDs must collaborate with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to annually update a publicly available summary of the survey responses

that is able to be disaggregated by the same categories as described above, as well as by school district and public school.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 18, 2025.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill was drafted in response to recent declines in enrollment in Washington's public schools. It would be helpful to gather information on why families are pulling their children out of schools, what needs the schools are not meeting, and how schools can be improved. Families often express that they feel forced to withdraw or transfer their students because schools do not care about their needs being unmet. The Washington School Information Processing Collaborative has the capacity to deploy the survey as presented in the bill and is mindful of the work needed to be done to make the survey equitable and accessible to all families.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Gathering data from the people named in this bill would be informative but the bill can go further by also gathering information from people who are keeping their students in public schools. Such a survey would make the findings more robust because the sample size would be larger. The survey should give respondents a chance to elaborate on what their children's needs are and what things have worked for their children. There are opportunities to dovetail this work with the State Board of Education's work on indicators for system health, as well as other research arms of the Legislature and higher-education research organizations.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Stephanie McClintock, prime sponsor; Dana Anderson, Washington School Information Processing Cooperative; and Dr. Austina De Bonte, WA Coalition for Gifted Education.

(Other) Nasue Nishida, Washington Education Association.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.