

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2319

As Reported by House Committee On:
Early Learning & Human Services

Title: An act relating to renaming certain state residential facilities for persons with developmental disabilities.

Brief Description: Renaming certain state residential facilities for persons with developmental disabilities.

Sponsors: Representatives Farivar, Penner, Reed, Scott, Thomas and Hill.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Early Learning & Human Services: 1/13/26, 1/23/26 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Renames Fircrest School, Rainier School, and Yakima Valley School as Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center, Rainier Residential Habilitation Center, and Yakima Valley Residential Habilitation Center.
- Renames the historical Interlake School as Interlake Residential Habilitation Center.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & HUMAN SERVICES

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Bergquist, Chair; Cortes, Vice Chair; Eslick, Ranking Minority Member; Burnett, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bernbaum, Dent, Goodman, Hill, Ortiz-Self, Penner and Taylor.

Staff: Omeara Harrington (786-7136).

Background:

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.

Department of Social and Health Services Developmental Disabilities Services.

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) assists individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families with obtaining services and supports based on individual preferences, capabilities, and needs. Clients may live in the community or in an institutional setting such as a residential habilitation center (RHC).

Residential Habilitation Centers.

The DSHS operates four RHCs that provide residential support in an institutional setting for clients with developmental disabilities. Examples of services provided at the RHCs include habilitative services, active treatment, training in daily living skills, medical and dental services, employment services, and behavioral supports. The RHCs generally only serve clients age 21 and older, though clients age 16 and older may be served on a short-term basis for respite or crisis stabilization services when no appropriate service options are available in the community. The RHCs are federally certified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as either an intermediate care facility (ICF) that provides individualized habilitative services, a nursing facility that is capable of caring for clients with unique medical needs, or both.

The four RHCs are:

- Fircrest School in Shoreline, which includes a nursing facility and an ICF;
- Lakeland Village Residential Habilitation Center in Medical Lake, which includes a nursing facility and an ICF;
- Rainier School in Buckley, which is an ICF; and
- Yakima Valley School in Selah, which is a nursing facility.

Statutory references to an additional RHC, Interlake School, remain in the Revised Code of Washington. The Interlake School was closed by the state in 1994.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The residential habilitation centers are officially renamed "residential habilitation centers," and references to "school" are removed. Specifically:

- Fircrest School is renamed Fircrest Residential Habilitation Center;
- Rainier School is renamed Rainier Residential Habilitation Center; and
- Yakima Valley School is renamed Yakima Valley Residential Habilitation Center.

Lakeland Village Residential Habilitation Center will retain its current name. References to the former Interlake School will be to Interlake Residential Habilitation Center.

Any existing references to Fircrest School, Rainier School, or Yakima Valley School retain full force and effect as would a reference to the updated names. The Department of Social and Health Services must update rules and make other changes necessary to reflect the new facility names.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill removes amendatory language in the underlying bill that altered the historical authority granted to the Secretary of the DSHS to designate certain surplus facilities and lands of Eastern State Hospital in the creation of Interlake School.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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 is a simple bill that does not change operations or funding. It just changes the names of the RHCs to swap "school" for "residential habilitation center." In bill conversations last session, the word "school" was found to be confusing and media reports referred to the Legislature closing schools, which distracted from the conversation. This is outdated terminology. "School" implies that RHCs provide educational services and that children live there. Neither of these things is accurate. Further, the names of these facilities should reflect the current services that are provided. There was a time when infants or young children were dropped off at these facilities and spent their lives there, and they served as schools for the children residing in them. This is no longer the case, and in the last century the state has established a better system where children attend schools in their communities. Very few youth are currently in RHCs, and they are not places where people should spend their lives. There should be a short-term placement that helps people reintegrate back to the community.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Darya Farivar, prime sponsor; Cathy Murahashi, The Arc of Washington; Chloe Merino, Disability Rights Washington; and Shawn Latham, Self Advocates In Leadership.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.