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**SENATE BILL 5961**

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**State of Washington**

**69th Legislature**

**2026 Regular Session**

**By** Senators C. Wilson, Dhingra, Frame, Nobles, Shewmake, and Wellman;  
by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction

Prefiled 01/05/26. Read first time 01/12/26. Referred to Committee  
on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to transferring the imagination library program  
2 from the department of children, youth, and families to the office of  
3 the superintendent of public instruction; amending RCW 43.216.200;  
4 adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; and recodifying RCW  
5 43.216.200.

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

7 **Sec. 1.** RCW 43.216.200 and 2022 c 39 s 1 are each amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The following definitions apply to this section:

10 (a) "Eligible children" means children from birth to age five;

11 (b) "National nonprofit foundation" means a national nonprofit  
12 foundation that exists for the purpose of working with local entities  
13 to identify eligible children and mail age-appropriate, high quality  
14 books each month to those children at no cost to families; and

15 (c) "Program" means the imagination library of Washington program  
16 created under subsection (2) of this section.

17 (2) Subject to the amounts appropriated for this specific  
18 purpose, the ~~((department, in coordination with the))~~ office of the  
19 superintendent of public instruction ~~((,))~~ shall select a Washington  
20 state-based qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization physically

1 located in Washington state to create and operate the program. The  
2 nonprofit organization selected under this subsection shall:

3 (a) Manage the daily operations of the program;

4 (b) Establish affiliate programs across the state;

5 (c) Advance and strengthen the affiliate programs with the goal  
6 of increasing enrollment in those programs;

7 (d) Develop, promote, and coordinate a public awareness campaign  
8 to make donors aware of the opportunity to donate to affiliate  
9 programs and make the public aware of the opportunity to register  
10 eligible children to receive books through the program; and

11 (e) Contract with a national nonprofit foundation to provide age-  
12 appropriate, high quality books each month to eligible children at no  
13 cost to families.

14 (3) (a) By November 1, (~~(2022)~~) 2026, and annually thereafter, the  
15 nonprofit organization selected to operate the program under  
16 subsection (2) of this section shall submit a report to the relevant  
17 committees of the legislature and the governor describing:

18 (i) The number of affiliate programs established by the program;

19 (ii) The number of children enrolled in each affiliate program;

20 and

21 (iii) The number of children statewide enrolled in the program.

22 (b) The report in this subsection must be submitted in compliance  
23 with RCW 43.01.036.

24 (4) (a) The nonprofit organization selected to operate the program  
25 under subsection (2) of this section shall provide payment to the  
26 national nonprofit foundation under subsection (2) (e) of this section  
27 that equals 50 percent of the cost to provide books to eligible  
28 children enrolled in the program.

29 (b) Each affiliate program shall provide payment to the program  
30 under subsection (2) of this section that equals the remaining cost  
31 to provide books to eligible children enrolled in the program.

32 (c) Nothing in this section requires that state funding be  
33 provided to the nonprofit organization selected under this subsection  
34 or to the program except as provided in subsection (5) of this  
35 section.

36 (5) The (~~department~~) office of the superintendent of public  
37 instruction may seek and accept gifts, grants, or endowments from  
38 public or private sources for the program and may spend any gifts,  
39 grants, or endowments or income from public or private sources on the  
40 program according to their terms.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    RCW 43.216.200 is recodified as a section  
2    in chapter 28A.300 RCW.

--- **END** ---