
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2848

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Orwall, Kilduff, Jenkins, Rodne, Goodman, Appleton, Haler, Kagi, Eslick, and Slatter)

1 AN ACT Relating to school and court processes to promote
2 attendance and reduce truancy; adding a new section to chapter
3 28A.345 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 43.185C RCW; and
4 creating a new section.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The legislature continues to
7 recognize, as it has in recent legislation, that school attendance
8 really matters, and that poor school attendance can have far-reaching
9 effects on academic performance and achievement, development of
10 social skills and school engagement, dropout rates, and even college
11 completion rates. In light of recent reports and recommendations that
12 have been received by the legislature as a result of that
13 legislation, from the educational opportunity gap oversight and
14 accountability committee and from the Washington state center for
15 court research, the legislature intends to make certain changes to
16 enhance the court-based and school-based efforts to promote
17 attendance and reduce truancy.

18 (2)(a) The legislature finds that the educational opportunity gap
19 oversight and accountability committee reviewed community truancy
20 board training materials and the Washington assessment of the risks

1 and needs of students to develop recommendations, required by chapter
2 205, Laws of 2016, related to:

3 (i) The cultural competency training that community truancy board
4 members, as well as others involved in the truancy process, should
5 receive;

6 (ii) Best practices for supporting and facilitating parent and
7 community involvement and outreach; and

8 (iii) The cultural relevance of the assessments employed to
9 identify barriers to attendance and the treatments and tools provided
10 to children and their families.

11 (b) The legislature recognizes that some of the recommendations
12 can be implemented without legislative action and that, for example,
13 there is ongoing work with respect to the Washington assessment of
14 the risks and needs of students tool and other assessment tools that
15 should address recommendations made in these regards. Other
16 recommendations, meanwhile, require legislative action. At this time,
17 the legislature intends to require the development of a model policy
18 and recommendations for best practices related to community truancy
19 boards, including training recommendations for school board members,
20 and ways to leverage community support and engagement, and to
21 encourage school districts to adopt a community truancy board policy.

22 (3) The legislature finds that the Washington state center for
23 court research has issued the inaugural detention report in response
24 to chapter 205, Laws of 2016, which shows a clear difference between
25 counties with respect to the use of detention for nonoffender
26 matters, including for truancy, and further shows that in many cases
27 detention for nonoffender matters is being served in juvenile
28 detention facilities. The legislature further finds that chapter 291,
29 Laws of 2017, imposed restrictions upon the use of detention,
30 providing that only if a child fails to comply with a court order
31 issued in a truancy matter, and the court tries other measures to
32 secure compliance, and the court makes a finding that other measures
33 to secure compliance have been tried but not been successful, and no
34 less restrictive alternative is available, may the court order
35 detention. In the future, the legislature intends to further restrict
36 the use of, or end altogether, detention in nonoffender matters such
37 as truancy. At this time, the legislature intends, subject to the
38 availability of funds, to provide for more therapeutic secure crisis
39 residential centers that are accessible and available for use by all
40 counties, but particularly those counties that appear from the

1 detention report to frequently use detention for nonoffender matters
2 such as truancy.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.345
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 (1) By December 1, 2018, the Washington state school directors'
6 association, in consultation with the office of the superintendent of
7 public instruction, the administrative office of the courts, and the
8 state truancy task force, must develop a model policy and recommend
9 best practices related to community truancy boards.

10 (a) The model policy must include training recommendations
11 appropriate for school board members related to their
12 responsibilities and governing role supporting community truancy
13 boards, and to other prevention and intervention systems related to
14 truancy. The model policy must be posted on the association's web
15 site, and updated periodically.

16 (b) The recommendations must include best practices for: Entering
17 into a memorandum of understanding with a juvenile court; interacting
18 and communicating with the community truancy board, for example
19 whether school board members should attend a community truancy board
20 meeting annually; identifying community truancy board members to
21 achieve diversity of experience; and leveraging community support and
22 engagement in the process.

23 (2) By the beginning of the 2019-20 school year, school districts
24 are encouraged to adopt and make available online a community truancy
25 board policy that is consistent with the model policy developed under
26 subsection (1) of this section.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 43.185C
28 RCW to read as follows:

29 Subject to the availability of funds, the office of homeless
30 youth prevention and protection must, in collaboration with the
31 Washington association of juvenile court administrators, and with
32 data provided by the Washington state center for court research,
33 regionally site secure crisis residential centers that meet
34 therapeutic standards so as to make these centers accessible and
35 available for use by all counties. The initial focus must be on those
36 counties that appear from the detention report to frequently use
37 detention for nonoffender matters such as truancy and which do not

1 have secure crisis residential centers that meet therapeutic
2 standards within geographic proximity.

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