

---

SENATE BILL 6148

---

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2018 Regular Session

By Senators Palumbo, Ranker, Saldaña, Darneille, Keiser, Wellman, and Llias

1 AN ACT Relating to achieving equitable educational outcomes for  
2 vulnerable children and youth; creating new sections; and providing  
3 an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that thousands of  
6 vulnerable, homeless youth in Washington go to sleep without the  
7 safety, stability, and support of a family or home. Students  
8 experiencing homelessness and those in foster care face similar  
9 challenges and educational outcomes. Homeless students may be former  
10 foster youth and foster youth may be former homeless students.  
11 Despite these odds, children and youth experiencing homelessness want  
12 to and deserve to have the opportunity to succeed in school. The  
13 state must provide an ample and equitable education to all children  
14 and youth regardless of their housing status. The legislature intends  
15 to powerfully leverage current collaboration and investments to align  
16 services, outcome measures, accountability, and resources to achieve  
17 educational equity by 2027 for children and youth experiencing  
18 homelessness. The goal of this effort is that children and youth  
19 experiencing homelessness achieve educational outcomes at the same  
20 rate as their general student population peers throughout the  
21 educational continuum from prekindergarten to postsecondary.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    (1) The department of children, youth, and  
2 families, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the  
3 department of commerce office of homeless youth prevention and  
4 protection programs, and the Washington student achievement council  
5 will convene a work group with aligned nongovernmental agencies to  
6 collaborate on creating a plan for children and youth experiencing  
7 homelessness to achieve educational equity with their general student  
8 population peers and close the disparities between racial and ethnic  
9 groups by 2027. The work group will:

10        (a) Review the educational outcomes of children and youth  
11 experiencing homelessness, including:

12            (i) Kindergarten readiness, early grade reading, school  
13 stability, high school completion, postsecondary enrollment, and  
14 postsecondary completion; and

15            (ii) Disaggregated data by race and ethnicity;

16        (b) Consider the outcomes, needs, and services for children and  
17 youth experiencing homelessness, and the specific needs of children  
18 and youth of color and those with special education needs;

19        (c) Map the current education support services including  
20 eligibility, service levels, service providers, outcomes, service  
21 coordination, data sharing, and overall successes and challenges;

22        (d) Engage stakeholders in participating in the analysis and  
23 development of recommendations, including youth experiencing  
24 homelessness, caseworkers, school districts and educators, early  
25 learning providers, postsecondary education advocates, and federally  
26 recognized tribes;

27        (e) Make recommendations for optimal continuum of education  
28 support services to homeless children and youth from prekindergarten  
29 to postsecondary that provide for shared and sustainable  
30 accountability to reach the goal of educational parity, including  
31 recommendations to:

32            (i) Align indicators and outcomes across organizations and  
33 programs;

34            (ii) Achieve racial and ethnic equity in educational outcomes;

35            (iii) Ensure access to consistent and accurate annual educational  
36 outcomes data;

37            (iv) Address system barriers such as data sharing;

38            (v) Detail options for governance and oversight to ensure  
39 educational services are continually available to children and youth  
40 experiencing homelessness regardless of status;

1 (vi) Detail a support structure that will ensure that educational  
2 records, educational needs, individualized education plans, credits,  
3 and other records will follow children and youth when they transition  
4 from district to district or another educational program or facility;

5 (vii) Explore the option of creating a specific statewide school  
6 district that supports the needs of children and youth experiencing  
7 homelessness and tracks their educational progress; and

8 (viii) Identify where opportunities exist to align policy,  
9 practices, and supports for students experiencing homelessness; and

10 (f) Outline which recommendations can be achieved through  
11 existing resources and regulations and which require policy,  
12 administrative, and resource adjustments.

13 (2) The purpose of the work group is to coordinate and implement  
14 the goals in subsection (1) of this section using research-based  
15 program strategies.

16 (3) The work group shall provide a report to the legislature by  
17 December 17, 2018, on the analysis, recommended plan, and legislative  
18 and administrative changes needed to achieve educational equity for  
19 children and youth experiencing homelessness with their general  
20 student population peers by 2027.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act expires December 31, 2018.

--- END ---