

SENATE BILL 5745

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Hargrove and Miloscia

Read first time 02/02/15. Referred to Committee on Human Services, Mental Health & Housing.

1 AN ACT Relating to implementing Becca task force truancy reform
2 recommendations; amending RCW 28A.225.005, 28A.225.020, 28A.225.030,
3 28A.225.035, and 28A.225.090; adding a new section to chapter 28A.225
4 RCW; and creating a new section.

20 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.225.020 and 2009 c 266 s 1 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) If a child required to attend school under RCW 28A.225.010
23 fails to attend school without valid justification, the public school
24 in which the child is enrolled shall:

25 (a) Inform the child's ~~((custodial))~~ parent(~~(, parents, or~~
26 ~~guardian))~~ by a notice in writing or by telephone whenever the child
27 has failed to attend school after one unexcused absence within any
28 month during the current school year. School officials shall inform
29 the parent of the potential consequences of additional unexcused
30 absences. If the ~~((custodial))~~ parent(~~(, parents, or guardian))~~ is
31 not fluent in English, the ~~((preferred practice is to))~~ school must
32 provide this information in a language in which the ~~((custodial))~~
33 parent(~~(, parents, or guardian))~~ is fluent;

34 (b) Schedule a conference or conferences with the ~~((custodial))~~
35 parent(~~(, parents, or guardian))~~ and child at a time reasonably
36 convenient for all persons included for the purpose of analyzing the
37 causes of the child's absences after two unexcused absences within
38 any month during the current school year. If a regularly scheduled
39 parent-teacher conference day is to take place within thirty days of

2 this conference on that day; and

3 (c) Take data-informed steps to eliminate or reduce the child's
4 absences. These steps shall include a risk and needs assessment using
5 a validated truancy assessment tool, if available, to identify areas

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6 of need, and where appropriate, providing an available approved best
7 practice or research-based intervention, or both, consistent with the
8 risk and needs assessment profile, adjusting the child's school
9 program or school or course assignment, providing more individualized
10 or remedial instruction, providing appropriate vocational courses or
11 work experience, referring the child to a community truancy board,
12 ~~((if available,))~~ requiring the child to attend an alternative school
13 or program, or assisting the parent or child to obtain supplementary
14 services that might eliminate or ameliorate the cause or causes for
15 the absence from school. If the child's parent does not attend the
16 scheduled conference, the conference may be conducted with the
17 student and school official. However, the parent shall be notified,
18 in a language in which the parent is fluent, of the steps to be taken
19 to eliminate or reduce the child's absence.

20 (2) ~~((For purposes of this chapter, an))~~ The definitions in this
21 subsection apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly
22 requires otherwise.

23 (a) "Truancy assessment tool" means a reliable and validated
24 assessment instrument designed to measure the risk and needs of a
25 student in each of the following domains: Aggression-defiance;
26 depression-anxiety; substance abuse; peer deviance; family
27 environment; and school engagement, for the purpose of assessing
28 needs and risk related to academic performance and attendance,
29 providing the information can be used in responding to risk and
30 needs, for selecting appropriate interventions and case management.

31 (b) "Unexcused absence" means that a child:

32 ~~((a))~~ (i) Has failed to attend the majority of hours or periods
33 in an average school day or has failed to comply with a more
34 restrictive school district policy; and

35 ~~((b))~~ (ii) Has failed to meet the school district's policy for
36 excused absences.

37 (3) If a child transfers from one school district to another
38 during the school year, the receiving school or school district shall
39 include the unexcused absences accumulated at the previous school or
40 from the previous school district for purposes of this section, RCW

1 7.21.030(2)(e), or may impose alternatives to detention such as
2 truancy assessment as required under subsection (i)(c) of this
3 section, history of any best practices or researched-based
4 intervention previously provided to the child by the child's current
5 school district, and a copy of the most dated truancy information
6 inclusive of online or written acknowledgment by the parent and
7 child, as provided for in RCW 28A.225.005.

8 (4) Subject to the availability of funds, the administrative
9 office of the courts must complete validation of the Washington
10 assessment of risk and needs of students for high school students not
11 later than August 30, 2015, develop and validate Washington
12 assessments of risk and needs for middle school and elementary school
13 students not later than August 30, 2016, and report the status of the
14 tool development and validation by January 1st of each calendar year
15 until development and validation are complete.