



Youth Development Division

255 Capitol St NE

Salem, OR 97310

Phone: 503-947-5600

SB 586: Youth Development Council Age Increase from 20 to 24

Senate Workforce Committee

February 23, 2015

Brenda Brooks, Deputy Director, Youth Development Division

Background:

Currently, the Youth Development Council statutes state that the Council oversees youth in a continuum beginning at school age – which we view as age 6 – up to age 20 in a manner that supports educational success, focuses on crime prevention, reduces high risk behaviors, and is integrated, measurable and accountable.

The goals of the Youth Development Council are to reconnect Opportunity Youth ages 16 to 20 with education and career, establish a secure connection for younger Priority Youth ages 6 to 15 with education and future career opportunities, and to address youth violence and crime. These goals are accomplished by developing state policy, and by funding community-based efforts that address barriers to education and career/workforce success.

Priority Youth are those youth ages 6 to 15 who are at risk of disconnecting from the education system, those who are already disconnected from the education system, or are at risk of being unable to transition successfully to the labor force.

Nationally, Opportunity Youth (or disconnected youth), are described as youth ages 16-24 not in school and not connected to the labor market.

Issue:

Because the Council has been restricted in its description of its population of older youth as those ages 16 to 20, it has been viewed as an obvious disconnect from the federal description of Opportunity Youth, which goes up through age 24.

The Youth Development Council's Youth Workforce Committee has been coordinating and aligning components of its work with the Youth Committee of the Oregon Workforce Investment Board. It was noted early in our discussions that the age range was a hindrance in funding alignment with programs in communities.



Oregon Department of Education

Kate Brown, Governor

Legislation:

SB 586 proposes to broaden the age range of youth overseen by programs and services of the Youth Development Council from age 20 to 24. The bill would allow the work of the Council to align with the national age range of Opportunity Youth.

SB 586 would allow for stronger alignment with programs administered by state and local agencies that support this population of youth through age 24.

Concerns:

The Youth Development Division has no concerns regarding this legislation, other than what is noted below.

Fiscal Impact:

Although there is no direct fiscal impact on the Youth Development Division, the higher age range would potentially attract more community-based and school-based programs to apply for funds in the Council's Request for Applications process. Currently, the division is not identified to receive additional funding over its Current Service Level.