

SB 475 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Human Services

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Meeting Dates: 3/12, 3/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Department of Human Services (DHS) to visit children age five or older in substitute care monthly, to include updates on academic progress. Requires DHS to address academic barriers and prepare written plan to support success and timely graduation. Directs DHS to conduct specified exit interview within 30 days of child's removal from substitute care placement. Requires children to be placed in the same or a less restrictive school setting than prior placement, and in all-inclusive classrooms, with limited exceptions based on evidence of the child's needs.

Requires DHS to provide youth age 16 or older with opportunity to create a facilitated plan as specified, that includes individuals youth invites, before they leave substitute care. Directs DHS to notify youth annually, in writing, of housing and higher education options, mental health resources, and who has access to their medical and mental health records. Adds requirements to those that must already be met, to allow school districts to provide abbreviated school day program to students that are foster youth, to include specified participation of case manager, foster parent, education surrogate and DHS Director.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

According to the Department of Human Services (DHS), 11,645 children spent at least one day in foster care in Oregon in 2017. Of them, 6,938 were age six or older. Senate Bill 475 requires monthly visits with children age five or older in substitute care monthly to include updates on academic progress and for academic difficulties or barriers to be addressed. It also requires: exit interviews to obtain specific information within 30 days of a child's removal from placement; new placement in the same or a less restrictive school setting than the prior placement; and inclusion in classrooms with children that are not in substitute care.

Senate Bill 475 also requires youth age 16 or older in substitute care to have an opportunity to create a facilitated plan before they leave substitute care, to assist with transitioning to adulthood, that includes individuals they invite. The measure also requires youth to be provided with annual, written notice of housing and higher education options, mental health resources, and who has access to their medical and mental health records. Finally, before a school district develops an abbreviated day school program for a student in substitute care, Senate Bill 475 requires their case manager, foster parent, education surrogate and the Director of DHS to be involved.