
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7250

AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes an advisory council within the Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) to (1) help develop the state's juvenile justice plan in line with federal requirements, (2) advise state agencies on administering the plan, and (3) review and comment on certain grant applications.

The bill requires the Police Officer Standards and Training Council, the JJPOC chairpersons, and representatives of JJPOC's community expertise subcommittee to develop a proposed (1) statewide uniform youth diversion policy for JJPOC's adoption and (2) youth diversion training curriculum for inclusion in minimum basic training programs that lead to police certification. Both must occur by February 1, 2026 (§ 5).

It also creates the following four annual reporting requirements:

1. the State Department of Education (SDE) must report to JJPOC on school districts' attendance review teams and effective practices these teams use to reduce chronic absenteeism,
2. municipalities operating a juvenile review board or other youth diversion programs must report data to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) on children diverted by using the boards or programs,
3. DCF must report to JJPOC on its implementation of the Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification Enhancement Plan, and

4. the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) must report an evaluation of the state's juvenile reentry success plan to JJPOC.

Lastly, regarding JJPOC's membership, the bill (1) expands it by adding the housing and emergency services and public protection commissioners, or their designees, and (2) requires the community expertise subcommittee, rather than the Judiciary Committee's House chairperson and ranking member, to appoint JJPOC's two members who are under age 26 with lived experience in the juvenile justice system.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 2 — ADVISORY COUNCIL

Purpose

By creating the advisory council, the bill helps the state meet its requirements for pursuing Title II formula grants under the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.

This federal law furthers juvenile crime prevention efforts by giving grants to states for programs that support delinquency prevention, intervention, and juvenile justice system improvements. Generally, to receive a grant a state must have a juvenile justice plan that meets specific requirements, designate a state agency to prepare and administer it, and have a state advisory group to give policy direction and participate in its preparation and administration.

In line with this federal requirement, the bill tasks the new council with (1) helping to develop and annually revise the state's juvenile justice plan and (2) advising state agencies on how to administer it and allocate grant funding. It also requires that the council have the opportunity to review and comment on the Title II grant applications submitted to the state.

Membership

The bill requires the council to have at least 15, but no more than 33, members. It consists of the OPM undersecretary who directs the Criminal Justice Policy and Planning Division, or the undersecretary's

designee, with the remaining members appointed by the governor. The governor must stagger initial council appointments.

For the governor's appointments, the bill requires at least (1) 20% to be under age 24 when first appointed and (2) three who either have experience in the juvenile justice system (either past or present), or, if that is not feasible and if it is appropriate, are a parent or guardian of someone with this experience.

The bill sets the term for appointed members at three years, starting on June 30 and ending on the same day or until the governor appoints a successor. It allows members to serve two full terms, which may be consecutive. A member appointed to fill a vacated position serves for the remaining term amount and may be reappointed, as long as it would not exceed the bill's two-term cap.

§§ 3, 4, 6 & 7 — REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Chronic Absenteeism (§ 3)

The bill requires SDE to annually report, beginning by February 1, 2026, to JJPOC on each school district with an attendance review team. The report must include (1) specific efforts and outcomes of teams in alliance districts, as reported in the alliance district plan, and (2) any effective practice an attendance review team implemented to reduce chronic absenteeism rates.

By law, school districts with chronic absenteeism rates above certain thresholds must establish attendance review teams. These teams are tasked with reviewing cases of truant and chronically absent children, discussing school interventions and community referrals, and making recommendations for the children and their parents or guardians.

Alliance districts are school districts with the lowest Accountability Index (AI) measures or that were previously designated as an alliance district in certain fiscal years (currently, there are 36 total). The AI score measures school district performance based on student standardized test scores plus additional measures such as student growth over time.

Municipal Diversion Data (§ 4)

The bill requires each municipality or municipality's agent that operates a juvenile review board or other youth diversion programs to annually report to DCF, and as DCF directs otherwise, on (1) data about children diverted through the board or programs and (2) the outcomes of the diversions.

Juvenile review boards are diversionary and prevention programs designed to help local police departments deal with juvenile offenders. They are usually composed of representatives of local youth service agencies, police departments, and the juvenile court.

Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Plan (§ 6)

The bill requires DCF to annually report to JJPOC, starting by July 1, 2025, on its implementation of the Specialized Trauma-Informed Treatment Assessment and Reunification (STTAR) Enhancement Plan that it released in March 2024. The first report must use metrics in use at the time of the report, but by September 30, 2025, the bill requires DCF to consider, and allows it to develop, added metrics to be used in the following reports.

The STTAR Enhancement Plan is an updated group home program for children removed from their homes by DCF due to high-risk situations.

Reentry Success Plan (§ 7)

The bill requires the OPM secretary to (1) annually report to JJPOC with an evaluation of the reentry success plan for juveniles released from DOC and judicial branch facilities and programs and (2) coordinate policy development between OPM and the judicial branch's Court Support Services Division (CSSD). It requires the evaluation to be done using a secure data enclave.

By law, the reentry success plan is developed by the CSSD executive director and the commissioners of correction, children and families, and education, or their designees, in consultation with JJPOC's incarceration, community expertise, and education subcommittees. It

incorporates specific restorative and transformative justice principles covering things like academics, housing, mentoring, treatments, and training, and requires a quality assurance framework and information about federal and state funding.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Judiciary Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 41 Nay 0 (04/04/2025)