

Assembly Bill 150

Fostering Youth Education Success

Assemblymember Jim Cooper

SUMMARY

Currently, only 58 percent of youth in foster care graduate, compared to 84 percent of all students statewide. The high mobility of foster youth is partly the cause of this achievement gap. Many of whom transfer an average eight times while in care, losing up to six months of their education with each move.

AB 150 seeks to improve high school graduation rates and post-secondary education success for foster youth and other highly mobile youth.

This bill ensures these youth receive full credit for partial but similar coursework completed at different schools with different course titles, which allows them to meet state minimum graduation requirements and better enabling them to graduate on time.

BACKGROUND

Currently, all students must meet a minimum set of courses established by the State in order to graduate from high school and receive a diploma.

In addition to courses set by the State, students must also complete any requirements set by the governing boards of local education agencies (LEAs).¹

Since 2010, AB 167 (Adams, Chapter 223, Statutes of 2009) and AB 216 (Stone, Chapter 324, Statutes of 2013) have increased the chances of foster youth to graduating by age 19.

AB's 167 and 216 allowed foster youth to waive graduation requirements set by LEAs that exceed state requirements when they transfer to the district or from one school to another, after their second year of high school.

¹ <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsgmin.asp>

ISSUE

Although foster youth are only required to complete minimum state graduation requirements when they transfer high schools after their second year, current law may create inadvertent and unnecessary delays in obtaining their diploma.

When foster youth transfer to a new school district, current law does not specify whether partial credits earned in a given subject area in one school district are required to be combined with partial credits for similar coursework completed in another district.

Not combining partial credits for foster youth who transfer schools forces them to repeat coursework, delaying their ability to graduate and increases their potential to dropout.

SOLUTION

AB 150 would remove barriers for foster youth and other highly mobile youth in graduating from high school and achieving post-secondary education success.

This bill clarifies that all credits earned in a given subject area, including partial credits, must be combined to establish a "one year course" to meet state minimum graduation requirements.

SUPPORT

Alliance for Children's Rights (Sponsor)

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