

Bill No. SB 1372

Barcode 692684

CHAMBER ACTION

Senate

House

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The Committee on Judiciary (Webster) recommended the following amendment:

Senate Amendment (with title amendment)

Delete everything after the enacting clause

and insert:

Section 1. Community Advisory Panel on Foster Care Pilot Program; creation; purpose; panel membership; court and panel duties; administration; evaluation.--

(1) There is created the Community Advisory Panel on Foster Care Pilot Program in Duval County. The purpose of the program is to identify educational needs and follow-up strategies for foster children who are 6 through 12 years of age and are enrolled in the Duval County school system. The goal of the program is to ensure that youth who are in foster care will be tested appropriately and placed in an educational environment that optimizes their opportunities for success.

(2) The pilot program shall consist of the cooperative efforts of:

(a) The Community Advisory Panel on Foster Care, as

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1 created under this section;

2 (b) The community-based care lead agency for foster
3 care and adoption in Duval County;

4 (c) The case managers assigned to children in foster
5 care;

6 (d) The Duval County School Board;

7 (e) Nova Southeastern University;

8 (f) The foster care parents of children currently in
9 the foster care system;

10 (g) When possible, the natural parents of children
11 currently in the foster care system; and

12 (h) The circuit court judge hearing a foster care
13 case.

14 (3)(a) The Community Advisory Panel on Foster Care is
15 created in the Fourth Judicial Circuit and shall consist of
16 the chief judge for the circuit, or another judge from the
17 circuit designated by the chief judge who is the lead judge in
18 the area of dependency and adoption, and 15 community
19 volunteers who are community leaders with diverse areas of
20 abilities and expertise. The chief judge, or the judge
21 designated by the chief judge, shall serve as the chair of the
22 panel. The 15 volunteers shall be comprised of:

23 1. Four members appointed by the chief judge, or by
24 the judge designated by the chief judge;

25 2. Four members appointed by the Secretary of the
26 Department of Children and Family Services, or his or her
27 designee;

28 3. Four members appointed by the Duval County School
29 Board; and

30 4. Three members appointed by the guardian ad litem
31 for Duval County.

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1 (b) The chief judge, or the judge from the circuit
2 designated by the chief judge, may issue orders and obtain
3 educational information relating to the students who are 6 to
4 12 years of age and are in the foster care system in District
5 IV of the department. Pursuant to the order the panel shall
6 review the academic progress, behavioral issues, and
7 attendance of each student and shall recommend referral of any
8 student for whom the review demonstrates a need for follow-up
9 services. The panel may prioritize referrals by assessing the
10 severity of need and recommending that the most critical needs
11 be met first. A student who is failing may be referred for
12 educational testing, for additional psychological and
13 therapeutic counseling as recommended, or for both, to
14 determine why he or she is failing and what accommodations and
15 remediation are needed.

16 (4) The community-based care lead agency shall provide
17 administrative support for the Community Advisory Panel on
18 Foster Care and for the operation of the pilot program. To
19 help facilitate the duties of the panel, the agency shall
20 employ:

21 (a) A full-time project coordinator who shall assist
22 the student's case manager in identifying resources for
23 educational testing and psychological and therapeutic
24 counseling. In addition, the project coordinator shall oversee
25 the development of an assessment tool that is designed to
26 determine the effectiveness of the pilot program.

27 1. The purpose of the assessment tool is to link
28 systems among providers of educational services, psychological
29 services, and case management services and the court system.

30 2. The entity that designs the assessment tool must,
31 during the first year of the pilot program, undertake the

1 following tasks:

2 a. Discovery. This phase includes meeting with
3 information technology staff from the department, school board
4 staff, and case managers.

5 b. Development. This phase consists of determining the
6 best method for data entry, the best database, and the best
7 data format.

8 c. Implementation. This phase comprises completing,
9 testing, and delivering the assessment tool.

10 d. Maintenance. This phase involves developing a
11 maintenance plan and schedule, after the initiation of the
12 assessment tool.

13 (b) A full-time psychologist who shall provide
14 educational testing and psychological and therapeutic
15 counseling to foster care children and provide advice,
16 research, assessments, and other services to the judges.

17 (5) The project coordinator shall submit an annual
18 report on the pilot program to the chief judge of the Fourth
19 Judicial Circuit, the President of the Senate, the Speaker of
20 the House of Representatives, the State Courts Administrator,
21 and the Secretary of the Department of Children and Family
22 Services.

23 (6) The pilot program expires on July 1, 2009.

24 Section 2. The sum of \$300,000 is appropriated from
25 the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Children and
26 Family Services for the community-based care lead agency for
27 foster care and adoption in Duval County for the 2006-2007
28 fiscal year, to be used in implementing the Community Advisory
29 Panel on Foster Care Pilot Program created in section 1 of
30 this act.

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1 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

2 And the title is amended as follows:

3 Delete everything before the enacting clause

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5 and insert:

6 A bill to be entitled

7 An act relating to children in foster care;

8 providing for the creation of the Community

9 Advisory Panel on Foster Care Pilot Program in

10 Duval County; providing purposes and goals;

11 providing for cooperative participation by

12 specified entities and individuals; creating

13 the Community Advisory Panel on Foster Care;

14 providing for panel membership; providing for a

15 chairperson; providing duties of specified

16 judges and panel members; providing for

17 administration by a community-based care lead

18 agency; providing for hiring specified

19 personnel; requiring development of an

20 assessment tool to determine the effectiveness

21 of the program; requiring an annual report;

22 providing for future expiration of the pilot

23 program; providing an appropriation; providing

24 an effective date.

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