

**CHAPTER 33****AN ACT**

HB 4084

Relating to the education of foster children; and declaring an emergency.

Whereas this state needs to be more focused on our message regarding foster children and their needs in our schools; and

Whereas the high school graduation rates of foster children in this state typically are less than half the high school graduation rates of the general student population in this state; and

Whereas this state needs to address the educational outcomes of foster children and should implement a pilot program that helps identify practices and solutions that can be applied in public schools throughout this state; and

Whereas Timber Ridge School, which is a public middle school in Albany, McDaniel High School, which is a public high school in Portland, and South Medford High School, which is a public high school in Medford, have demonstrated a dedication to improving the educational outcomes of foster child students; and

Whereas organizations in this state are committed to improving the educational outcomes of foster child students, including Anthony's Circle, which has a proven track record of a 98 percent graduation rate of underserved youth in Portland; and

Whereas efforts already are underway to help improve the educational outcomes of foster child students, including efforts by Anthony's Circle in collaborating with the Department of Human Services and with the Department of Education; now, therefore,

**Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

**SECTION 1.** (1) As used in this section, "foster child student" means a student enrolled in middle school or high school who is a foster child because the student is:

(a) In the care and custody of the Department of Human Services pursuant to the provisions of ORS chapter 418 or 419B and is placed in substitute care; or

(b) A ward, as defined in ORS 419A.004, who remains in the legal custody of the ward's parent or who is in the care and custody of the Department of Human Services but who is residing with the ward's parent.

(2)(a) The Department of Education shall establish and administer a pilot program to provide support for foster child students to improve the educational outcomes of foster child students.

(b) Under the pilot program, the department shall provide grants to public schools in this state to improve the educational outcomes of foster child students by addressing:

(A) The disparities experienced by foster child students in indicators of academic success;

(B) The historical practices leading to disproportionate outcomes for foster child students; and

(C) The educational needs of foster child students.

(c) Schools participating in the pilot program must ensure that foster child students are provided access to an individual who will:

(A) Serve as an educational advocate for a foster child student; and

(B) Provide guidance for and support to a foster child student for educational purposes.

(3) The department shall use moneys in the Statewide Education Initiatives Account to provide funding for the pilot program. The pilot program shall be considered a statewide education plan for purposes of ORS 327.254.

(4) The department shall select three public middle or high schools in this state to participate in the pilot program. The department shall focus on geographically diverse regions when selecting schools to participate in the pilot program.

(5) The Department of Education shall submit reports concerning the pilot program to the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to education as follows:

(a) The first report must be submitted no later than September 15, 2025, and must summarize progress on the development and administration of the pilot program.

(b) The second report must be submitted no later than September 15, 2027, and:

(A) Must provide a summary of the pilot program, including any changes in the educational outcomes of foster child students who participated in the pilot program; and

(B) May provide recommendations for a statewide education plan related to foster child students.

(6) The State Board of Education may adopt any rules necessary for the administration of this section.

**SECTION 2.** The State Board of Education shall adopt any rules, and the Department of Education shall take any actions, necessary to ensure that grants described in section 1 of this 2024 Act are distributed no later than July 1, 2024.

**SECTION 3.** Section 1 of this 2024 Act is repealed on June 30, 2027.

**SECTION 4.** Notwithstanding any other law limiting expenditures, the limitation on expenditures established by section 14, chapter 449, Oregon Laws 2023, for the biennium ending June 30, 2025, as the maximum limit for payment of expenses by the Department of Education from the Statewide Education Initiatives Account established under ORS 327.250 for operations, is

increased by \$130,942 for the implementation of section 1 of this 2024 Act.

**SECTION 5.** Notwithstanding any other law limiting expenditures, the limitation on expenditures established by section 13 (3), chapter 449, Oregon Laws 2023, for the biennium ending June 30, 2025, as the maximum limit for payments of grants-in-aid, program costs and purchased services by the Department of Education from the Statewide Education Initiatives Account established under ORS 327.250 for all other grants, is

increased by \$450,000 for the implementation of section 1 of this 2024 Act.

**SECTION 6.** This 2024 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2024 Act takes effect on its passage.

Approved by the Governor March 27, 2024

Filed in the office of Secretary of State March 27, 2024

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