

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to education; requiring, with limited exception, that a child in foster care remain enrolled in his or her school of origin; providing that the relevant agency which provides child welfare services and local education agency are jointly liable for the costs of transportation for the child in foster care to attend his or her school of origin; requiring the Department of Education and each agency which provides child welfare services and local education agency to develop certain policies and procedures relating to children in foster care; eliminating the Program of School Choice for Children in Foster Care; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

In 2015, Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. (20 U.S.C. §§ 6301 et seq.) This Act requires each state to adopt a plan that describes the steps the state will take to ensure the educational stability of children in foster care, including requiring, with limited exception, a child in foster care to remain enrolled in the child’s school of origin, which is the public school in which he or she was enrolled before entering foster care. (20 U.S.C. § 6311)

Section 7 of this bill requires that a child who enters foster care or changes placement while in foster care remain enrolled in the child’s school of origin if the agency which provides child welfare services determines that it is in the best interests of the child. **Section 7** also sets forth certain criteria that must be used by the agency in making such a determination.

Section 7.5 of this bill requires the board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of a charter school to allow a pupil who leaves foster care to remain enrolled in his or her school of origin until the end of the school year unless the parent or guardian of the pupil elects to enroll the pupil in a different school.

Section 8 of this bill requires the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency to provide and pay for the costs of transportation of a child in foster care to the child’s school of origin. **Section 8** also requires the agency which provides the child welfare services and the local education agency to provide and pay for the costs of transportation of a child in foster care to the child’s school of origin until any dispute concerning the cost of transportation is resolved.

Section 9 of this bill requires that the Department of Education, each local education agency and each agency which provides child welfare services to designate a single point of contact who is responsible for developing certain policies and procedures relating to children in foster care.

Section 10 of this bill requires the State Board of Education to prepare an annual report concerning the academic progress of children in foster care who attend a public school in this State. **Section 10** also requires: (1) each education agency to submit to the Department of Education a report relating to children in foster care; and (2) an agency which provides child welfare services to a child enrolled in public school in this State to provide any information requested by a local education agency as soon as practicable.

If a court finds that a child is in need of protection and places the child other than with a parent, an agency acting as the custodian of the child is required to



report to the court before any hearing for a review of the placement of the child. (NRS 432B.580) **Section 13.5** of this bill requires the agency to include in the report certain information about the education of the child.

Existing law establishes the Program of School Choice for Children in Foster Care. (NRS 388E.100) This program allows the legal guardian or custodian of a child who is in foster care to apply to participate in the Program so that the child may be enrolled in a public school other than the public school which the child is zoned to attend. (NRS 388E.110) **Section 15** of this bill eliminates this Program. **Section 15** also eliminates a provision which provides that a child who is in the legal or physical custody of an agency which provides child welfare services and is awaiting foster care placement is deemed to be homeless for the purposes of the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, 42 U.S.C. §§ 11301 et seq.

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 388.040 is hereby amended to read as follows:
388.040 1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, the board of trustees of a school district that includes more than one school which offers instruction in the same grade or grades may zone the school district and determine which pupils must attend each school.

2. The establishment of zones pursuant to subsection 1 does not preclude a pupil from attending a:

- (a) Charter school;
- (b) University school for profoundly gifted pupils;
- (c) Public school outside the zone of attendance that the pupil is otherwise required to attend if the pupil is ~~enrolled in the Program of School Choice for Children in Foster Care established pursuant to NRS 388E.100;~~ *a child in foster care who is remaining in his or her school of origin pursuant to section 7 of this act;* or

(d) Public school outside the zone of attendance that the pupil is otherwise required to attend if the pupil has been issued a fictitious address pursuant to NRS 217.462 to 217.471, inclusive, or the parent or legal guardian with whom the pupil resides has been issued a fictitious address pursuant to NRS 217.462 to 217.471, inclusive.



Sec. 2. Chapter 388E of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto the provisions set forth as sections 3 to 10, inclusive, of this act.

Sec. 3. *“Agency which provides child welfare services” has the meaning ascribed to it in NRS 432B.030.*

Sec. 4. *“Foster care” has the meaning ascribed to it in 45 C.F.R. § 1355.20.*

Sec. 5. *“Local education agency” includes, without limitation, the board of trustees of a school district and the sponsor of a charter school.*

Sec. 6. *“School of origin” means the public school in which a child was enrolled at the time that the child was placed in foster care or the school in which a child who is in foster care is enrolled at the time of the most recent change in the placement of the child.*

Sec. 7. 1. *When a child enters foster care or changes placement while in foster care, the agency which provides child welfare services to the child shall determine whether it is in the best interests of the child for the child to remain in his or her school of origin. In making this determination, there is a rebuttable presumption that it is in the best interests of the child to remain in his or her school of origin.*

2. *In determining whether it is in the best interests of a child in foster care to remain in his or her school of origin, the agency which provides child welfare services, in consultation with the local education agency, must consider, without limitation:*

- (a) The wishes of the child;*
- (b) The educational success, stability and achievement of the child;*
- (c) Any individualized education program or academic plan developed for the child;*
- (d) Whether the child has been identified as an English learner;*
- (e) The health and safety of the child;*
- (f) The availability of necessary services for the child at the school of origin; and*
- (g) Whether the child has a sibling enrolled in the school of origin.*

↳ The costs of transporting the child to the school of origin must not be considered when determining whether it is in the best interests of the child to remain at his or her school of origin.

3. *If the agency which provides child welfare services determines that it is in the best interests of a child in foster care to attend a public school other than the child’s school of origin:*



- (a) *The agency which provides child welfare services must:*
- (1) *Provide written notice of its determination to every interested party as soon as practicable; and*
 - (2) *In collaboration with the local education agency, ensure that the child is immediately enrolled in that public school; and*
- (b) *The public school may not refuse to enroll the child on the basis that the public school does not have:*
- (1) *A certificate stating that the child has been immunized and has received proper boosters for that immunization;*
 - (2) *A birth certificate or other document suitable as proof of the child's identity;*
 - (3) *A copy of the child's records from the school the child most recently attended; or*
 - (4) *Any other documentation required by a policy adopted by the public school or the local education agency.*

Sec. 7.5. *The board of trustees of a school district or the governing body of a charter school must allow a pupil who leaves foster care to remain enrolled in his or her school of origin until the end of the school year during which the child leaves foster care unless the parent or guardian of the pupil elects to enroll the pupil in a different school.*

Sec. 8. *1. If the agency which provides child welfare services to a child has determined pursuant to section 7 of this act that it is in the best interests of the child to remain in his or her school of origin, the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency must provide the child with transportation to the school of origin:*

- (a) *For the entire time that the child is in foster care; and*
- (b) *Until the end of the school year during which the child leaves foster care.*

2. The agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency are jointly responsible for the costs of transportation of a child to the child's school of origin unless the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency mutually agree otherwise.

3. If a dispute arises between the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency that is related to the transportation of a child in foster care to the child's school of origin, including, without limitation, a dispute related to the costs of transportation, and the dispute is not resolved within 5 business days, the juvenile or family court with jurisdiction over the child must resolve the dispute by court order within 5 business days.



4. If a dispute arises between the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency that is related to the transportation of a child in foster care, the agency which provides child welfare services and the local education agency must provide the child with transportation to the school of origin until the dispute is resolved.

Sec. 9. *1. The Department, each local education agency and each agency which provides child welfare services shall designate a single point of contact who is responsible for:*

(a) Developing policies and procedures necessary for the Department, local education agency or agency which provides child welfare services, as applicable, to comply with the requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. §§ 6301 et seq., including, without limitation, policies and procedures relating to the:

(1) Communication of information relating to children in foster care among the Department, local education agencies and agencies which provide child welfare services; and

(2) Transportation of children in foster care to their schools of origin.

(b) Communicating and coordinating with other single points of contact designated pursuant to this section.

2. Policies and procedures relating to transportation of a child in foster care to his or her school of origin must include, without limitation, a plan for paying the costs of such transportation.

3. As used in this section, "single point of contact" means a natural person or a team of personnel, each of whom has the ability and authority to perform the responsibilities described in this section.

Sec. 10. *1. The State Board shall prepare an annual report concerning the academic progress of children in foster care who attend a public school in this State that includes, without limitation, the information prescribed by 20 U.S.C. § 6311(h)(1)(c)(i)-(iii).*

2. Each local education agency shall, on or before the date established by the Department, and in the form prescribed by the Department, prepare and submit to the Department a report on children in foster care who attend a public school within the jurisdiction of the local education agency. This report must include the information prescribed by 20 U.S.C. § 6311(h)(1)(c)(i)-(iii).



3. An agency which provides child welfare services to a child enrolled in public school in this State shall provide any information requested by the local education agency to the local education agency as soon as practicable.

Sec. 11. NRS 388E.010 is hereby amended to read as follows:

388E.010 As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in ~~NRS 388E.020, 388E.030 and 388E.040~~ ***sections 3 to 6, inclusive, of this act*** have the meanings ascribed to them in those sections.

Sec. 12. NRS 392.010 is hereby amended to read as follows:

392.010 Except as to the attendance of a pupil pursuant to NRS 388.820 to 388.874, inclusive, ~~388E.110~~ or 392.015, ***or section 7 of this act***, or a pupil who is ineligible for attendance pursuant to NRS 392.4675 and except as otherwise provided in NRS 392.264 and 392.268:

1. The board of trustees of any school district may, with the approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction:

(a) Admit to the school or schools of the school district any pupil or pupils living in an adjoining school district within this State or in an adjoining state when the school district of residence in the adjoining state adjoins the receiving Nevada school district; or

(b) Pay tuition for pupils residing in the school district but who attend school in an adjoining school district within this State or in an adjoining state when the receiving district in the adjoining state adjoins the school district of Nevada residence.

2. With the approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the board of trustees of the school district in which the pupil or pupils reside and the board of trustees of the school district in which the pupil or pupils attend school shall enter into an agreement providing for the payment of such tuition as may be agreed upon, but transportation costs must be paid by the board of trustees of the school district in which the pupil or pupils reside:

(a) If any are incurred in transporting a pupil or pupils to an adjoining school district within the State; and

(b) If any are incurred in transporting a pupil or pupils to an adjoining state, as provided by the agreement.

3. In addition to the provisions for the payment of tuition and transportation costs for pupils admitted to an adjoining school district as provided in subsection 2, the agreement may contain provisions for the payment of reasonable amounts of money to defray the cost of operation, maintenance and depreciation of capital improvements which can be allocated to such pupils.



Sec. 13. NRS 217.464 is hereby amended to read as follows:
217.464 1. If the Attorney General approves an application, the Attorney General shall:

- (a) Designate a fictitious address for the participant; and
- (b) Forward mail that the Attorney General receives for a participant to the participant.

2. The Attorney General shall not make any records containing the name, confidential address or fictitious address of a participant available for inspection or copying, unless:

(a) The address is requested by a law enforcement agency, in which case the Attorney General shall make the address available to the law enforcement agency; or

(b) The Attorney General is directed to do so by lawful order of a court of competent jurisdiction, in which case the Attorney General shall make the address available to the person identified in the order.

3. If a pupil is attending or wishes to attend ~~fa public school that is located outside the zone of attendance as authorized by paragraph (c) of subsection 2 of NRS 388.040 or~~ a public school that is located in a school district other than the school district in which the pupil resides as authorized by NRS 392.016, the Attorney General shall, upon request of the public school that the pupil is attending or wishes to attend, inform the public school of whether the pupil is a participant and whether the parent or legal guardian with whom the pupil resides is a participant. The Attorney General shall not provide any other information concerning the pupil or the parent or legal guardian of the pupil to the public school.

Sec. 13.5. NRS 432B.580 is hereby amended to read as follows:

432B.580 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section and NRS 432B.513, if a child is placed pursuant to NRS 432B.550 other than with a parent, the placement must be reviewed by the court at least semiannually, and within 90 days after a request by a party to any of the prior proceedings. Unless the parent, guardian or the custodian objects to the referral, the court may enter an order directing that the placement be reviewed by a panel appointed pursuant to NRS 432B.585.

2. An agency acting as the custodian of the child shall, before any hearing for review of the placement of a child, submit a report to the court, or to the panel if it has been designated to review the matter, which includes:



(a) An evaluation of the progress of the child and the family of the child and any recommendations for further supervision, treatment or rehabilitation.

(b) Information concerning the placement of the child in relation to the child's siblings, including, without limitation:

(1) Whether the child was placed together with the siblings;

(2) Any efforts made by the agency to have the child placed together with the siblings;

(3) Any actions taken by the agency to ensure that the child has contact with the siblings; and

(4) If the child is not placed together with the siblings:

(I) The reasons why the child is not placed together with the siblings; and

(II) A plan for the child to visit the siblings, which must be approved by the court.

(c) ***Information concerning the child's education, including:***

(1) A copy of an academic plan developed for the child pursuant to NRS 388.155, 388.165 or 388.205 **H**;

(2) *The grade and school in which the child is enrolled;*

(3) *The name of the each school the child attended before enrolling in the school in which he or she is currently enrolled and the corresponding dates of attendance;*

(4) *Whether the child has not completed or passed any course of instruction that the child should have completed or passed by the time the report is submitted, which has resulted in the child having a deficiency in credits;*

(5) *A copy of any individualized education program developed for the child;*

(6) *A copy of any plan developed in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. § 794;*

(7) *A summary of any special education services received by the child;*

(8) *Whether a request that the child receive special education services has been made and, if so, the outcome of such a request; and*

(9) *Whether, in the opinion of the agency, it is necessary to appoint a surrogate parent to represent the child in all matters relating to the provision of a free and appropriate public education to the child.*

(d) A copy of any explanations regarding medication that has been prescribed for the child that have been submitted by a foster home pursuant to NRS 424.0383.



3. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, a copy of the report submitted pursuant to subsection 2 must be given to the parents, the guardian ad litem and the attorney, if any, representing the parent or the child. If the child was delivered to a provider of emergency services pursuant to NRS 432B.630 and the parent has not appeared in the action, the report need not be sent to that parent.

4. After a plan for visitation between a child and the siblings of the child submitted pursuant to subparagraph (4) of paragraph (b) of subsection 2 has been approved by the court, the agency which provides child welfare services must request the court to issue an order requiring the visitation set forth in the plan for visitation. If a person refuses to comply with or disobeys an order issued pursuant to this subsection, the person may be punished as for a contempt of court.

5. The court or the panel shall hold a hearing to review the placement, unless the parent, guardian or custodian files a motion with the court to dispense with the hearing. If the motion is granted, the court or panel may make its determination from any report, statement or other information submitted to it.

6. Except as otherwise provided in this subsection and subsection 5 of NRS 432B.520, notice of the hearing must be given by registered or certified mail to:

- (a) All the parties to any of the prior proceedings;
- (b) Any persons planning to adopt the child;
- (c) A sibling of the child, if known, who has been granted a right to visitation of the child pursuant to NRS 127.171 and his or her attorney, if any; and
- (d) Any other relatives of the child or providers of foster care who are currently providing care to the child.

7. The notice of the hearing required to be given pursuant to subsection 6:

(a) Must include a statement indicating that if the child is placed for adoption the right to visitation of the child is subject to the provisions of NRS 127.171;

(b) Must not include any confidential information described in NRS 127.140; and

(c) Need not be given to a parent whose rights have been terminated pursuant to chapter 128 of NRS or who has voluntarily relinquished the child for adoption pursuant to NRS 127.040.

8. The court or panel may require the presence of the child at the hearing and shall provide to each person to whom notice was given pursuant to subsection 6 a right to be heard at the hearing.

9. The court or panel shall review:



(a) The continuing necessity for and appropriateness of the placement;

(b) The extent of compliance with the plan submitted pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 432B.540;

(c) Any progress which has been made in alleviating the problem which resulted in the placement of the child; and

(d) The date the child may be returned to, and safely maintained in, the home or placed for adoption or under a legal guardianship.

10. The provision of notice and a right to be heard pursuant to this section does not cause any person planning to adopt the child, any sibling of the child or any other relative, any adoptive parent of a sibling of the child or a provider of foster care to become a party to the hearing.

11. As used in this section, "individualized education program" has the meaning ascribed to it in 20 U.S.C. § 1414(d)(1)(A).

Sec. 14. The provisions of NRS 354.599 do not apply to any additional expenses of a local government that are related to the provisions of this act.

Sec. 15. NRS 388E.020, 388E.030, 388E.040, 388E.100, 388E.110, 388E.120, 388E.130, 388E.140, 388E.150 and 432B.135 are hereby repealed.

Sec. 16. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2017.

