
THIRD READING

Bill No: AB 1659
Author: Ransom (D), et al.
Amended: 8/21/26 in Senate
Vote: 21

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE: 7-0, 6/3/26

AYES: Pérez, Ochoa Bogh, Cabaldon, Choi, Cortese, Gonzalez, Reyes

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: Senate Rule 28.8

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 4/20/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Juvenile court school pupils: joint transition planning policy:
courses of study

SOURCE: Alameda County Office of Education

DIGEST: This bill requires, as joint transition planning policy, a school district or charter school in which the juvenile court school (JCS) pupil will be enrolling to assign a staff member of the school district or charter school to serve as the point person for transition liaison responsibilities.

Senate Floor Amendments of 8/21/26: Incorporate double-jointing language to avoid a chaptering out conflict with a section of SB 685 (Cortese, 2026).

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

- 1) Requires county offices of education (COEs) and county probation departments to have a joint transition planning policy to coordinate the transition of pupils between JCSs and other public schools. Requires a COE to assign transition oversight responsibilities to existing COE personnel, who shall coordinate with the county probation department and relevant local educational agencies (LEAs) to ensure:

- a) The immediate enrollment of a pupil transferred from a JCS in an appropriate public school in their community, and their immediate placement in appropriate courses;
 - b) The transfer of education records, including an individualized education program (IEP) and, pursuant to the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the pupil's plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 plan, if applicable, within 72 hours of a pupil's release from a JCS;
 - c) The acceptance of full or partial course credits for coursework completed by the student while enrolled in a JCS;
 - d) The implementation of the pupil's transition plan, if one exists; and
 - e) Access to information about postsecondary opportunities, including college financial aid. (Education Code (EC) § 48647)
- 2) Requires LEAs to accept full or partial credit for coursework satisfactorily completed by a student while attending a public school, including JCS. (EC § 48645.5 and 51225.2.)
 - 3) Requires LEAs to provide educational records of transferring students to their next LEA within two business days of receiving the transfer notification. The records include, among other items, a transcript updated with full or partial credit for coursework completed by the student. (EC § 49069.5)

This bill:

- 1) Requires the school district or charter school in which the JCS pupil will be enrolling to assign a staff member of that school district or charter school to serve as the point person for transition liaison responsibilities.
- 2) Requires the school district or charter school to notify the COE and county probation department of the assigned staff member's name and contact information.
- 3) Requires the assigned staff member, and other existing personnel of the school district or charter school as needed to serve the pupil, to work in collaboration with the COE transition oversight personnel throughout the calendar year to ensure all of the following:

- a) The timely transfer of complete and accurate education records, including the pupil's IEP adopted pursuant to the federal IDEA and the pupil's plan adopted pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, if applicable, when a pupil enters the JCS.
 - b) The immediate enrollment in an appropriate public school in the school district or charter school when a pupil is transferred from the JCS.
 - c) The acceptance, upon enrollment by the pupil in a public school, of course credits, including partial credits, for coursework completed in the JCS, as specified.
 - d) The immediate placement in appropriate courses, based on coursework completed by the pupil, as specified.
- 4) Restates existing law that requires LEAs to issue full or partial credits on an official transcript within two business days of foster youth transferring between public schools and JCSs.
- 5) Incorporates additional changes to Section 51225.2 of the Education Code proposed by SB 685 (Cortese, 2026) to be operative only if this bill and SB 685 are enacted, and this bill is enacted last.

Comments

- 1) *Need for the bill.* According to the author, "Students who are justice-impacted are children who deserve stability, care, and support, especially during major transitions in their lives. AB 1659 provides greater support for these students by ensuring there is a designated point of contact when a student transitions back to their home school district upon release from a court school. This bill strengthens the partnership between the county office of education and the student's home district to put the student first and establish a more effective transition support system. A smooth reintegration process will reduce disruptions to these students' education and help them stay engaged, focused on their future, and moving toward success."
- 2) *What is a juvenile court school?* According to the California Department of Education (CDE), JCSs are COE operated educational programs located within juvenile detention facilities, serving youths who are under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court and are temporarily or permanently out of traditional school settings due to incarceration or legal proceedings.

Juveniles who are under the authority of the juvenile court system are required to attend school under California's compulsory education requirements. JCS students are provided a California standards-based curriculum and must take educational assessment tests required of all students in the state's public schools. The minimum school day for JCSs is 240 minutes of instruction. These schools offer students a course of study that leads to a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate.

Upon release, or after the court terminates jurisdiction, students of ages sixteen to eighteen who are not exempt from compulsory school attendance are required to continue their public education. These students are provided with planning and transition services critical to a successful transfer back to a public school.

For the 2023-24 school year, CDE reported the total enrollment of 13,203 students across the state's 51 JCSs, with a mean enrollment of 264.1 students and a median of 131 students per school.

- 3) *JCS Transition Statewide Work Group Report and Recommendations*. In 2014, the Legislature passed AB 2276 (Bocanegra, Chapter 901, Statutes of 2014), requiring the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) to convene a statewide group with stakeholders from the community, advocacy organizations, and education and probation department leaders to study four specific performance areas impacting pupils transitioning from a JCS back to public schools in their community. The legislation directs the statewide work group to develop a model, study existing successful county programs and policies, report its findings, and provide recommendations for state actions to improve:
- a) Immediate transfer of educational records;
 - b) Uniform systems for calculating and awarding course credits;
 - c) Transition planning; and
 - d) Immediate enrollment of transferring pupils.

The resulting report found, among other things, that communication between COE, school district, county probation, and other stakeholders was inadequate, complete and accurate educational student records were not immediately transferred, and school districts had difficulty complying with statutes requiring the immediate enrollment of a pupil transitioning from a JCS.

Relative to transition planning, the report makes the following recommendations, among other things:

- a) A student transition team should be established for each student and shall include, at a minimum, a representative from the COE, the pupil's resident school district, and the county probation department.
- b) The student transition team should provide each student with a plan that includes the requisite academic and behavioral actions necessary to establish a clear pathway back to a comprehensive public school in their community.
- c) Identified staff shall be accountable for providing necessary assistance and effective case management to each transitioning student. Each COE, county probation department, and school district shall have one or more individuals specifically identified as the juvenile court student transition liaison/specialist. The transition liaison/specialist from each agency should coordinate their efforts to ensure successful student transition.
- d) Accurate student records shall be available for all students transitioning into and out of a juvenile court facility.
- e) A transitioning student from a JCS shall be immediately enrolled, regardless of the availability of academic records, among other things.
- f) Each school district shall identify one or more persons responsible for ensuring the immediate enrollment of a student transitioning from a juvenile court facility.
- g) School districts and COEs should adopt and comply with the California Model Policy, which provides a partial credit calculation formula, explanations of the policy's provisions, and implementation tools for use by school personnel and social workers.

In the years following the release of the report, several recommendations have gone on to be codified, including requirements for COEs to ensure that a student enrolled in a JCS for more than 20 school days has an individualized transition plan, and that COEs specifically assign personnel to collaborate with county probation departments to be responsible for transition oversight.

This bill seeks to implement another area of recommendations made by the report, namely, for school districts and charter schools to assign a staff member to serve as the point person for transition liaison responsibilities.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: Yes

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/21/26)

Alameda County Office of Education (source)
 Alameda County Board of Supervisors
 Association of California School Administrators
 Back to the Start
 California Alliance of Child and Family Services
 California County Superintendents
 California Teachers Association
 Children Now
 Disability Rights California
 East Bay Community Law Center
 Fresh Lifelines for Youth
 Fresno County Office of Education
 Los Angeles County Deputy Probation Officers AFSCME Local 685
 Los Angeles County Office of Education
 National Center for Youth Law
 Office of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools
 Santa Clara County Office of Education
 Supervising Deputy Probation Officers Union, Teamsters Local 986
 Yolo County Board of Education

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/21/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 76-0, 4/20/26

AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Flora, Fong, Gabriel, Gallagher, Garcia, Gipson, Jeff Gonzalez, Mark González, Hadwick, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Kalra, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Bonta, Patterson, Celeste Rodriguez, Ward

Prepared by: Therresa Austin / ED. / (916) 651-4105

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