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SENATE BILL NO. 356

Offered January 12, 2022

Prefiled January 11, 2022

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 2.2-5211 and 2.2-5212 of the Code of Virginia, relating to Children's Services Act; special education programs.

Patron—Stuart

Referred to Committee on Education and Health

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 2.2-5211 and 2.2-5212 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 2.2-5211. State pool of funds for community policy and management teams.

A. There is established a state pool of funds to be allocated to community policy and management teams in accordance with the appropriation act and appropriate state regulations. ~~These funds, as made available by the General Assembly, shall be expended for the provision of~~ public or private nonresidential or residential services for ~~troubled youths~~ children, youth, and families. However, funds for private special education services shall only be expended on private educational programs that are licensed by the Board of Education or an equivalent out-of-state licensing agency. Effective July 1, 2022, funds for private special education services shall ~~only~~ be expended ~~only~~ on private educational programs that the Office of Children's Services certifies as having reported their tuition rates on a standard reporting template developed by the Office. The Office of Children's Services shall consult with private special education services providers in developing the standard reporting template for tuition rates.

The purposes of this system of funding are to state pool shall:

1. Place authority for making program and funding decisions at the community level;
2. Consolidate categorical agency funding and institute community responsibility for the provision of services;
3. Provide greater flexibility in the use of funds to purchase services based on the strengths and needs of children, ~~youths~~ youth, and families; and
4. Reduce disparity in accessing services and to reduce inadvertent fiscal incentives for serving children and youth according to differing required local match rates for funding streams.

B. The state pool shall consist of funds that serve the target populations identified in subdivisions 1 through 6 in the purchase of residential and nonresidential services for children and youth. References to funding sources and current placement authority for the targeted populations of children and youth are for the purpose of accounting for the funds in the pool. It is not intended that children and youth be categorized by individual funding streams in order to access services. The target population shall be the following target populations:

1. Children and youth placed for purposes of special education in approved private school educational programs, previously funded by the Department of Education through private tuition assistance;

2. Children and youth with disabilities placed by local social services agencies or the Department of Juvenile Justice in private residential facilities or across jurisdictional lines in private, special education day schools, if the individualized education program indicates that such school is the appropriate placement while living in foster homes or child-caring facilities, previously funded by the Department of Education through the Interagency Assistance Fund for Noneducational Placements of Handicapped Children;

3. Children and youth for whom foster care services, as defined by § 63.2-905, are being provided;

4. Children and youth placed by a juvenile and domestic relations district court, in accordance with the provisions of § 16.1-286, in a private or locally operated public facility or nonresidential program, or in a community or facility-based treatment program in accordance with the provisions of subsections B or C of § 16.1-284.1;

5. Children and youth committed to the Department of Juvenile Justice and placed by it in a private home or in a public or private facility in accordance with § 66-14; and

6. ~~Children~~ Except as otherwise provided in subdivision 7, children and youth previously placed pursuant to subdivision 1 in approved private school educational programs for at least six months who will receive transitional services in a public school setting. State pool funds shall be allocated for no longer than 12 months for transitional services. Local agencies may contract with a private school education program provider to provide transition services in the public school; and

59 7. Children and youth who transfer from an approved private school educational program to a
60 public school special education program established and funded jointly by a local governing body and
61 school division located within Planning District 16 pursuant to a memorandum of agreement for the
62 purpose of providing special education, related services, or both, within a public day program, when (i)
63 the public school special education program is able to provide services comparable to those for an
64 approved private school special education program and (ii) the student would require placement in an
65 approved private school special education program but for the availability of the public school special
66 education program.

67 References to funding sources and current placement authority for the targeted populations of
68 children and youth described in this subsection shall be for the purpose of accounting for the funds in
69 the pool. Children and youth shall not be categorized by individual funding streams in order to access
70 services.

71 C. The General Assembly and the governing body of each county and city shall annually appropriate
72 such sums of money as shall be sufficient to (i) provide special education services and foster care
73 services for children and youth identified in subdivisions B 1, 2, 3, and 6, and 7 and (ii) meet relevant
74 federal mandates for the provision of these services. The Each community policy and management team
75 shall anticipate to the best of its ability the number of children and youth for whom such services will
76 be required and reserve funds from its state pool allocation to meet these such needs. Nothing in this
77 section prohibits shall prohibit local governments from requiring parental or legal financial contributions,
78 where not specifically prohibited by federal or state law or regulation, utilizing a standard sliding fee
79 scale based upon ability to pay, as provided in the appropriation act.

80 D. When a community services board established pursuant to § 37.2-501, local school division, local
81 social service agency, court service unit, or the Department of Juvenile Justice has referred Referral of a
82 child and family to a family assessment and planning team and that team has recommended,
83 recommendation by the family assessment and planning team of the proper level of treatment and
84 services needed by that for the child and family, and has determined determination by the family
85 assessment and planning team of the child's eligibility for funding for services through the state pool of
86 funds, then the shall satisfy the fiscal responsibility of the community services board, the local school
87 division, local social services agency, court service unit, or Department of Juvenile Justice has met its
88 fiscal responsibility for that to the child for the with regard to services funded through the pool.
89 However, the community services board, the local school division, local social services agency, court
90 service unit, or Department of Juvenile Justice shall continue to be responsible for providing services
91 identified in an individual family service plans plan that are within the agency's scope of responsibility
92 and that are not funded separately from through the state pool.

93 Further, in any instance that E. If a local social services agency places an individual who is (i) 18
94 through 21 years of age, inclusive, who is (ii) eligible for funding from the state pool, and is (iii)
95 properly defined as a school-aged school-age child with disabilities pursuant to § 22.1-213 is placed by
96 a local social services agency that has custody across jurisdictional lines in a group home in the
97 Commonwealth and the individual's individualized education program (IEP), as prepared by the placing
98 jurisdiction, indicates that a private day school placement is the appropriate educational program for
99 such individual, the financial and legal responsibility for the individual's special education services and
100 IEP shall remain, in compliance with the provisions of federal law, Article 2 (§ 22.1-213) of Chapter 13
101 of Title 22.1, and Board of Education regulations, the responsibility of the placing jurisdiction until the
102 individual reaches the age of 21, inclusive, or is no longer eligible for special education services. The
103 financial and legal responsibility for such special education services shall remain with the placing
104 jurisdiction, in compliance with the provisions of federal law, Article 2 (§ 22.1-213 et seq.) of Chapter
105 13 of Title 22.1, and Board of Education regulations, unless the placing jurisdiction has transitioned all
106 appropriate services with the individual.

107 E. F. In any matter properly before a court for which state pool funds are to be accessed, the court
108 shall, prior to final disposition, and pursuant to §§ 2.2-5209 and 2.2-5212, refer the matter to the
109 community policy and management team for assessment by a local family assessment and planning team
110 authorized by policies of the community policy and management team for assessment to determine the
111 recommended level of treatment and services needed by the child and family. The family assessment
112 and planning team making the assessment shall make a report of the case or forward a copy of the
113 individual family services plan to the court within 30 days of the court's written referral to the
114 community policy and management team. The court shall consider the recommendations of the family
115 assessment and planning team and the community policy and management team. If, prior to a final
116 disposition by the court, the court is requested to consider a level of service not identified or
117 recommended in the report submitted by the family assessment and planning team, the court shall
118 request the community policy and management team to submit a second report characterizing
119 comparable levels of service to the requested level of service. Notwithstanding the provisions of this
120 subsection, the court may make any disposition as is authorized or required by law. Services ordered

pursuant to a disposition rendered by the court pursuant to this section shall qualify for funding as appropriated under this section.

F. G. As used in this section, "transitional services" includes services delivered in a public school setting directly to students with significant disabilities or intensive support needs to facilitate their transition back to public school after having been served in a private special education day school or residential facility for at least six months. "Transitional services" includes one-on-one aides, speech therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral health services, counseling, applied behavior analysis, specially designed instruction delivered directly to the student, or other services needed to facilitate such transition that are delivered directly to the student in their public school over the 12-month period as identified in the child's individualized education program.

§ 2.2-5212. Eligibility for state pool of funds.

A. ~~In order to be eligible for funding for services through the state pool of funds, a~~ *A child, youth, or family with a child, shall meet one or more of the criteria specified in subdivisions 1 through 4 and shall be eligible for funding through the state pool if it is determined, through the use of a uniform assessment instrument and in accordance with process and by policies of the community policy and management team to have access to these funds, that the child or youth:*

1. ~~The child or youth has~~ *Has* emotional or behavior problems that:
a. Have persisted over a significant period of time or, though only in evidence for a short period of time, are of such a critical nature that intervention is warranted;

b. Are significantly disabling and are present in several community settings, such as at home, in school, or with peers; and

c. Require services or resources that are unavailable or inaccessible, or that are beyond the normal agency services or routine collaborative processes across agencies, or require coordinated interventions by at least two agencies,;

2. ~~The child or youth has~~ *Has* emotional or behavior problems, or both, and ~~currently~~ *(i) is in, or is at imminent risk of entering, purchased residential care. In addition, the child or youth; (ii) requires services or resources that are beyond normal agency services or routine collaborative processes across agencies,; and (iii) requires coordinated services by at least two agencies,;*

3. ~~The child or youth requires~~ *Requires* placement *(i) for purposes of special education in approved private school educational programs or, (ii) for transitional services as set forth in subdivision B 6 of § 2.2-5211; or (iii) transfers from an approved private school educational program to a public school special education program established and funded jointly by a local governing body and school division located within Planning District 16 pursuant to a memorandum of agreement for the purpose of providing special education, related services, or both, within a public day program, when (a) the public school special education program is able to provide services comparable to those for an approved private school special education program and (b) the student would require placement in an approved private school special education program but for the availability of the public school special education program; or*

4. ~~The child or youth requires~~ *Requires* foster care services as defined in § 63.2-905.

B. For purposes of determining eligibility for the state pool of funds, "child" or "youth" means (i) a person younger than 18 years of age or (ii) any individual through 21 years of age who is otherwise eligible for mandated services of the participating state agencies including special education and foster care services.