

1 H.246

2 Introduced by Representatives McGill of Bridport, Bos-Lun of Westminster,
3 Burrows of West Windsor, Chapin of East Montpelier, Cole of
4 Hartford, Cordes of Bristol, Eastes of Guilford, Logan of
5 Burlington, Olson of Starksboro, and Tomlinson of Winooski

6 Referred to Committee on

7 Date:

8 Subject: Education; postsecondary education; homeless youth; youth exiting
9 foster care; liaison

10 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require
11 postsecondary schools in Vermont to designate an official liaison to students
12 experiencing homelessness and students exiting the foster care system, as well
13 as develop policies requiring priority housing and class enrollment options and
14 fee waivers for such students.

15 An act relating to supports to help students experiencing homelessness and
16 students exiting the foster care system succeed in postsecondary educational
17 institutions

18 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

19 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 181 is added to read:

20 § 181. STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS AND STUDENTS

21 EXITING THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM

1 (a) Student Liaison Officer. Each postsecondary school operating in
2 Vermont shall designate an official liaison for students experiencing
3 homelessness and students exiting the foster care system, to be called the
4 Student Liaison Officer. The Liaison shall be responsible for understanding
5 the provisions of the federal and State law pertaining to financial aid eligibility
6 of current and former foster youth and students experiencing homelessness,
7 including unaccompanied homeless youth, and for identifying services
8 available and appropriate for enrolled students who fall under one or more of
9 these categories. The Liaison shall inform current and prospective students
10 about student financial aid and other assistance available to youth experiencing
11 homelessness and current and former foster youth and assist such students in
12 applying for and receiving federal and State financial aid, including the
13 eligibility of such students as independent students under the Higher Education
14 Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1087vv (definition of independent student).

15 (b) Class enrollment. The board of trustees or other governing body of
16 each postsecondary school operating in Vermont shall adopt and ensure
17 enforcement of a policy that gives students experiencing homelessness or
18 exiting the foster care system priority in class enrollment. The policy shall
19 ensure such students have access to classes despite work obligations,
20 transportation issues, or other barriers they may experience at a higher rate
21 than other students.

1 (c) Housing. The board of trustees or other governing body of each
2 postsecondary school operating in Vermont shall adopt and ensure
3 enforcement of a policy that gives students experiencing homelessness or
4 exiting the foster care system priority in accessing existing on-campus housing.
5 The policy shall require students experiencing homelessness to be enrolled at
6 least half-time in order to access on-campus housing. The policy shall also
7 include a plan to provide students experiencing homelessness with housing
8 during school breaks.

9 (d) Fees. The board of trustees or other governing body of each
10 postsecondary school operating in Vermont shall adopt and ensure
11 enforcement of a policy that allows for waivers of registration fees and
12 laboratory fees for students experiencing homelessness or exiting the foster
13 care system.

14 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

15 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.