

Introduced by Senator Aanestad

February 23, 2006

An act to amend Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to foster care.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1516, as introduced, Aanestad. Foster care services.

Existing law declares the intent of the Legislature to preserve and strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the public. Existing law includes various provisions relating to the provision of appropriate placement and other services for children in foster care.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to a provision relating to foster children.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: no.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 16000 of the Welfare and Institutions
2 Code is amended to read:
3 16000. (a) It is the intent of the Legislature to preserve and
4 strengthen a child's family ties whenever possible, removing the
5 child from the custody of his or her parents only when necessary
6 for his or her welfare or for the safety and protection of the
7 public. If a child is removed from the physical custody of his or
8 her parents, preferential consideration shall be given whenever
9 possible to the placement of the child with the relative as
10 required by Section 7950 of the Family Code. If the child is

1 removed from his or her own family, it is the purpose of this
2 chapter to secure as nearly as possible for the child the custody,
3 care, and discipline equivalent to that which should have been
4 given to the child by his or her parents. It is further the intent of
5 the Legislature to reaffirm its commitment to children who are in
6 out-of-home placement to live in the least restrictive, most family
7 like setting and to live as close to the child's family as possible
8 pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section 16501.1. Family
9 reunification services shall be provided for expeditious
10 reunification of the child with his or her family, as required by
11 law. If reunification is ~~not possible or likely~~ *impossible or*
12 *unlikely*, a permanent alternative shall be developed.

13 (b) It is further the intent of the Legislature to ensure that all
14 pupils in foster care and those who are homeless as defined by
15 the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42
16 U.S.C. Sec. 11301 et seq.) have the opportunity to meet the
17 challenging state pupil academic achievement standards to which
18 all pupils are held. In fulfilling their responsibilities to pupils in
19 foster care, educators, county placing agencies, care providers,
20 advocates, and the juvenile courts shall work together to maintain
21 stable school placements and to ensure that each pupil is placed
22 in the least restrictive educational programs, and has access to the
23 academic resources, services, and extracurricular and enrichment
24 activities that are available to all pupils. In all instances,
25 educational and school placement decisions ~~must~~ *shall* be based
26 on the best interests of the child.