

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## ESSB 6295

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### C 258 L 08

Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Creating workplace-based learning opportunities.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Kilmer, Rockefeller, Hobbs, Shin, Franklin, Marr, Rasmussen, Kastama, Kauffman, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Hatfield, Berkey and Regala).

**Senate Committee on Higher Education**  
**Senate Committee on Ways & Means**  
**House Committee on Higher Education**  
**House Committee on Appropriations**

**Background:** More than 34 percent of Washington residents age 18 to 64 have only a high school diploma. The 2008 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education in Washington identifies the role that the higher education system can play in addressing this issue and preparing Washington's workforce. The Master Plan recognizes the need to create more coordinated career pathways among the two-year and four-year degree programs. Specifically, the Master Plan cites the need for more portable and flexible options for promoting and financing skill upgrade training and professional development.

**Summary:** The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) selects up to eight public or private institutions of higher education, including at least four community or technical colleges, to develop and offer pilot projects providing employer workplace-based educational programs with distance learning components. Institutions apply to become pilot colleges and are selected based upon established criteria. By September 2008, the WTECB selects employers. They have the ability to offer employment and workplace-based educational programs with distance learning components in cooperation with selected higher education institutions. The pilot program is funded using a matching fund strategy and is evaluated by December 1, 2012, after which the pilot program expires.

A work group is jointly convened by the WTECB and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, to take the following actions related to electronically distributed learning in addition to the study outlined in the original bill: (1) review and establish standards and best practices; (2) recommend methods to increase student access as well as identify barriers to participation and completion; (3) determine methods to increase the supply of open course materials; (4) recommend methods to increase the availability of digital open textbooks; and (5) review and report demographic information on programs of study including enrollments, retention, and completion. Participation requires a demonstrated commitment from workplaces applying for the grant.

The WTECB identifies and evaluates current national private employer workplace-based educational programs with distance learning components provided by higher education public institutions. The results of the study are reported to the Legislature by December 1, 2008.

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate	48	0	
House	96	0	(House amended)
Senate			(Senate refused to concur)
House	94	0	(House amended)
Senate	49	0	(Senate concurred)

**Effective:** June 12, 2008