

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1986

As of March 24, 2009

Title: An act relating to peer mentoring.

Brief Description: Authorizing a peer mentoring pilot program at Western Washington University and a community or technical college.

Sponsors: Representatives Hasegawa, Anderson, Wallace, White and Sells.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/09/09, 95-0.

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 3/24/09.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Staff: Aldo Melchiori (786-7439)

Background: Mentoring in schools has been defined in many ways, but in general it is commonly defined as a sustained relationship between a youth and an adult or an older youth to support, guide, and assist the younger person facing academic challenges and decisions. The number of mentoring programs has grown in recent years. Potential mentors are recruited from various sources including high schools, colleges and universities, professional, and religious communities, as well as neighborhood citizens. Appropriately matching mentors with younger students is a key component of most programs. While research on the effects of mentoring is scarce, some studies and program evaluations do support positive claims.

Summary of Bill: Western Washington University (WWU) establishes a mentoring pilot project in partnership with a community or technical college identified by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). The goals of the mentoring program are to (1) encourage elementary students to complete high school and pursue college; (2) provide positive role models; and (3) develop a model that is scalable. The pilot project must be implemented within existing resources. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) makes grants to participating institutions from the State Work Study Program appropriations.

Pilot project institutions (1) recruit college students to serve as mentors in identified schools; (2) develop a curriculum to train mentors; (3) solicit grants, awards, and gifts; (4) develop outcome measures; and (5) provide community outreach and publicity. A preliminary report

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to the Legislature is due by December 1, 2010, and a final report is due on December 1, 2011.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 17, 2009.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill accomplishes two things. First, it encourages civic engagement by college students. Second, it helps younger students set high goals. Similar efforts have been very successful in Wisconsin. This bill will help fulfill the goal in the strategic master plan for increasing the pipeline of students able to go from high school to college. It is designed to change the expectations of students and parents.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Hasegawa, prime sponsor; Sherry Burkey, WWU; Cynthia Torres-Jimanez, SBCTC; Rochelle Sharp, HECB.