

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2717

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to creating innovations in higher education.

Brief Description: Creating innovations in higher education.

Sponsors: Representatives Seaquist and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/30/12 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Encourages the public baccalaureate institutions to design innovative approaches to increase the number of resident students gaining baccalaureate degrees or further updating their academic credentials with a focus on high-growth sectors of the economy.
- Encourages the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to charter a consortium of volunteer community and technical colleges to design innovative approaches to rapidly and substantially increase the cost-effective delivery of developmental and remedial education, and test these innovations in pilot projects where possible.
- Directs the public baccalaureate institutions and the SBCTC to report to the Governor and the Legislature by August 1, 2012, and again by December 1, 2012.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Carlyle, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Asay, Buys, Crouse, Fagan, Hasegawa, Pollet, Sells, Springer, Warnick, Wylie and Zeiger.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Reykdal.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

A 2011 study of education levels compared to earnings and unemployment in the United States conducted by the Georgetown University, found that workers with higher levels of education have more opportunity to increase earnings and stay employed during recessions. The study estimated that by 2018 about two-thirds of all employment will require some college education or better.

According to the United States Census, nearly 31 percent of adults over age 25 in Washington have a bachelor's degree or higher. State analysis conducted by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) estimated that about one in three working-age adults had a high school diploma or less as their highest level of education and found that to reach the "Tipping Point" to have the best chance of earning a wage to support oneself and one's family, an individual needs at least one year of postsecondary education and a credential.

In Washington, approximately 26 percent of employers hiring during 2010 could not find enough qualified applicants. The biennial survey conducted by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) found that over 28,000 employers hiring in 2010 reported difficulty finding applicants with the right levels of education and skills, and reported impacts such as lowering productivity, more outsourcing, and moving part of their operation out of state.

Another state report, completed in January 2012, estimates gaps between the supply of educated individuals and the labor market demand forecast over a five-year period. The report, *A Skilled and Educated Workforce*, conducted jointly by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the SBCTC, and the Workforce Board, estimated that, in order to meet labor market demand, Washington will need to increase the number of additional degrees and certificates per year between 2014 and 2019, as follows:

- 9,000 more mid-level associate degrees and certificates;
- 10,000 more bachelors degrees; and
- 9,000 graduate or professional level degrees.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Public baccalaureate institutions are encouraged to collaborate in the design of innovative approaches to greatly increase the number of resident students working toward and gaining baccalaureate degrees or further updating or advancing their academic credentials. They are required to submit an interim report to the Governor and the Legislature by August 1, 2012, and a final report by December 1, 2012. The interim report must include a survey of relevant innovations by the institutions, and the final report must propose a comprehensive plan for implementing further, system-wide innovations with a focus on the high-growth sectors of the state's economy. The public baccalaureate institutions are directed to work with the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) or its successor agency, the State Board for

Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), students, faculty, business, and other partners as appropriate.

The SBCTC is encouraged to charter a consortium of volunteer community and technical colleges to design innovative approaches to rapidly and substantially increase the cost-effective delivery of developmental and remedial education. Wherever possible, those innovations are to be tested in immediate pilot projects. The SBCTC is required to submit to the Governor and the Legislature an interim report by August 1, 2012, and a final report and proposals for implementation by December 1, 2012.

The SBCTC must include in the interim, a survey of relevant innovations by any of the colleges, and propose in the final report a comprehensive plan for implementing further, system-wide innovations designed to rapidly and substantially increase the cost-effectiveness of remedial and developmental education instruction for the full range of students seeking access to college and university education. The SBCTC is directed to work with the HECB or its successor agency, students, faculty, business, and other partners as appropriate.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), students, and faculty, are added to the list of collaborators for public baccalaureate institutions. Students and faculty are added to the list of collaborators for the SBCTC. Reporting requirements are clarified with a survey of innovations to be included in the interim report and proposals to be included for the final report.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available. New fiscal note requested on January 30, 2012.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) We appreciate your recognition of the number of adults and younger adults who are in need of college degrees and certificates in order to be productive in a changing economy. We appreciate your recognition of our role in helping students learn or brush up in basic skills that are necessary for them to continue on into college level studies earning a certificate and degree. There are pilot programs that have shown significant positive results in student achievement and cost reduction. Software to support instruction in remedial courses includes services, instruction, and content that is specifically designed for remedial students. The synchronous online instruction and telephone access allows students and teachers to remain in contact. These pilots include detailed skills assessments before and during courses.

(In support with concerns) We are in the business of innovating. The high-cost, high-demand programs are not free. Low-cost programs pay for the high-cost, high-growth sector programs. We are more innovative than five years ago and we strive to become more innovative in the years to come. We appreciate your attention to our efficiency and effectiveness and the ties we have to economic activity. We are looking at everything we can to ensure students graduate without delay. We have implemented over 40 different curricula policy and advising changes. Our ability to drive additional degree attainment in high demand fields in this economy is in serious jeopardy. We are in the best position to make use of what is coming in higher education. A lot of the innovation that has happened on our campus is due to budget reductions but also because our faculty are always struggling to do better. We believe a report to the committee might be better than a formal report to the Legislature. We are also very mindful of the resources we have, and we are innovative out of necessity. Innovation does not look the same at our different institutions.

(With concerns) We believe faculty should be involved.

(Information only) There are statewide, system-wide, pre-college efforts under way. These include national, evidence-based best practices in reducing course sequences, integrating workforce content with academic content known as I-BEST, reducing course sequences, integrating pre-college with workforce programs, modularizing curriculum, and developing major competency based models in pre-college. We are taking the best learning and disseminating it. Key principles that guide our decisions about innovations are affordability, access, accountability, and outcomes. Through self-paced math models, students who were struggling are now finding success by combining face-to-face instruction with online learning. Developmental education is a road block to most of our students. Innovative programs typically come from faculty and faculty would like to be involved.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Seaquist, prime sponsor; and Zachary Johnson, Blackboard, Inc.

(In support with concerns) Chris Mulick, Washington State University; Sherry Burkey, Western Washington University; Margaret Shepherd, University of Washington; and Julie Garver, The Evergreen State College.

(With concerns) Bernal Baca, American Federation of Teachers, Washington.

(Information only) Michelle Andreas, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Lee Lambert, Shoreline Community College; and Amy Kinsel, Shoreline Community College and American Federation of Teachers, Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.