

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HCR 4416

As Passed House:
March 6, 2014

Brief Description: Approving specific statewide educational attainment goals.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Pollet, Zeiger, Seaquist and Gregerson.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

None.

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/6/14, 69-27.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Approves statewide educational attainment goals.
- Encourages the Washington Student Achievement Council to develop and adopt strategies that will enable the state to achieve each of the goals and report back to the Governor and the Legislature with specific recommendations for those strategies that require legislation or specific appropriations.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

The Washington Student Achievement Council.

Legislation enacted in 2012 created the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). The WSAC must propose higher education attainment goals, recommend resources, monitor progress, propose improvements and innovations in higher education to adapt to evolving needs, and advocate for the higher education system.

The WSAC is required to take a leading role in higher education research and analysis, and link the work of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), the State Board for Community and Technical College (SBCTC), the State Board of Education (SBE), the

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Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB), the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board), public baccalaureate institutions, and independent schools and colleges.

State Higher Education Goals and Strategic Planning.

The WSAC must propose educational attainment goals and priorities aligned with the state's biennial budget and policy cycles. The goals must address the needs of Washington residents to reach higher levels of educational attainment and Washington's workforce needs for certificates and degrees in particular fields of study.

The WSAC must identify the resources to meet statewide goals and recognize current state economic conditions and resources. In proposing goals, the WSAC must collaborate with the OSPI, the PESB, the SBE, the SBCTC, the public baccalaureate institutions, independent colleges and degree-granting institutions, certificate-granting institutions, and the Workforce Board.

The WSAC is required to create a two-year strategic action plan, to be updated every two years and a Ten-Year Roadmap to be updated every two years. In order to conduct strategic planning, the WSAC must collaborate with related agencies and stakeholders. Strategies must address:

- strategic planning, including setting benchmarks and goals for long-term degree production generally and in particular fields of study;
- expanding access, affordability, quality, efficiency, and accountability among the various institutions of higher education;
- higher education finance planning and strategic investments;
- system design and coordination;
- improving student transitions;
- higher education data and analysis, in collaboration with the Education Data and Research Center;
- college and career preparedness in collaboration with the OSPI and the SBE;
- expanding participation and success for racial and ethnic minorities in higher education; and
- relevant policy research.

The WSAC is charged with a variety of other duties including the administration of state financial aid, the regulation of for-profit, degree-granting institutions, and research.

Summary of Bill:

The following statewide educational attainment goals are approved:

1. All adults in Washington, ages 25 to 44, will have a high school diploma or equivalent by 2023.
2. At least 70 percent of Washington adults, ages 25 to 44, will have a postsecondary credential by 2023.
3. The cost of tuition, where an individual resides in the state, economic status, race or ethnicity, or other status of an individual, shall not be a barrier for any resident to obtain a postsecondary certificate or degree from an institution of higher education.

By December 1, 2014, the WSAC is encouraged to:

- develop and adopt strategies that will enable the state to achieve each of the goals and report back to the Governor and the Legislature with specific recommendations for those strategies that require legislation or specific appropriations, including timelines and benchmarks towards achieving each goal; and
 - include this information in the WSAC's strategic action plan required in statute.
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Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.