

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SSB 5559

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**As Passed House:**  
April 15, 2013

**Title:** An act relating to educational specialist degrees at regional universities and the state college.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing educational specialist degrees at Central Washington University, Western Washington University, and The Evergreen State College.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Senators Bailey, Kohl-Welles, Tom and McAuliffe).

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Higher Education: 3/12/13, 3/19/13 [DP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed House: 4/15/13, 97-0.

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Authorizes Central Washington University, The Evergreen State College, and Western Washington University to offer Educational Specialist degrees.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Pedersen, Reykdal, Riccelli, Sawyer, Scott, Sells, Smith, Tarleton, Walsh and Wylie.

**Staff:** Luke Wickham (786-7146).

**Background:**

The regional universities include Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University, and Western Washington University. As stated in statute, the primary purposes of the regional universities are to offer undergraduate and graduate programs through the

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master's degree. Statute further defines the specific types of degrees that these universities may provide. Statute authorizes bachelor's degrees in arts, science, and arts in education at the regional universities. The regional universities are further authorized to provide master's degrees in areas determined by the faculty and the boards of trustees to be appropriate for the granting of such degrees.

In 2001 the Legislature authorized Eastern Washington University to offer applied, but not research, doctorate level degrees in physical therapy, subject to review.

The only state college in Washington is The Evergreen State College. The Evergreen State College is authorized by statute to grant any degree through the master's degree.

An Educational Specialist degree (Ed.S.) is an advanced degree designed to be between a master's degree and doctoral degree. Legislation passed in 2011 allows the board of trustees at Eastern Washington University to offer an Ed.S. The program at Eastern Washington University offers an Ed.S. in school psychology.

**Summary of Bill:**

The boards of trustees of Central Washington University, The Evergreen State College, and Western Washington University are allowed to offer Ed.S. degrees.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The only change in this bill from the one that the House of Representatives passed is the inclusion of The Evergreen State College in the group of institutions that would be authorized to offer an Ed.S. degree. The Legislature authorized Eastern Washington University to offer the Ed.S. degree in 2011. This responds to educators and school administrators looking to continue their education beyond the master's degree and currently, at least in the northwest region, there are no other opportunities to do so. The immediate interest in this authority is to offer an Ed.S. degree in school psychology. The master's program in school psychology at Central Washington University already exceeds the Ed.S. degree requirements as provided by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the National Association of School Psychologists. The Ed.S. degree is in demand among people who cannot move to another area to pursue that degree. The Ed.S. degree is considered between a master's and a doctorate degree.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Sherry Burkey, Western Washington University; and Steve DuPont, Central Washington University.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.