

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1705

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to basic education for adults at community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Concerning basic education for adults at community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Reykdal, Tarleton, Zeiger, Sells and Pollet; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/10/15, 2/20/15 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Legislature to provide the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges with a separate appropriation to provide basic adult education.
- Creates a formula for determining the appropriation amount each academic year.
- Requires the Caseload Forecast Council to estimate the number of full-time equivalent students who will enroll in basic education for adults courses at community and technical colleges.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregory, Reykdal, Sells and Tarleton.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Holy and Van Werven.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Hargrove and Stambaugh.

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: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Educational Attainment Goals.

The Student Achievement Council (Council) is statutorily required to propose educational attainment goals and priorities to meet the state's higher education needs. In 2013 the Council established two educational attainment goals for 2023 that the Legislature adopted in 2014. These goals are:

1. All adults in Washington, ages 25-44, will have a high school diploma or equivalent.
2. At least 70 percent of Washington adults, ages 25-44, will have a postsecondary credential.

Basic Education for Adults.

The community and technical colleges (CTCs) are required under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 to provide adult education for persons who are over the age of 16 who are not enrolled, or required to be enrolled, in secondary school under state law, and who:

- do not have a high school diploma or degree, or have not achieved an equivalent level of education;
- lack sufficient mastery of basic educational skills to function effectively in society; or
- are unable to speak, read, or write English.

According to the Washington Adult Education State Plan, 10 percent of the population has less than a twelfth grade education. Adult education includes academic, vocational education or training, basic skills and literacy training, or occupational education. The basic education for adults programs include:

- Adult Basic Education and English as a Second Language;
- Comprehensive Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) Pathway;
- English literacy and civics education;
- High School 21+;
- High School Equivalency;
- Project Integrated Digital English Acceleration;
- Volunteer Literacy Programs; and
- WorkFirst.

The CTCs may waive all or a portion of tuition, services, and activity fees for students 19 years of age or older who are eligible for resident tuition and are enrolled in a course or program to finish their high school education.

The Caseload Forecast Council.

The Caseload Forecast Council (Forecast Council) is in charge of overseeing the preparation and approving of the official state caseload forecasts. The Forecast Council estimates the number of persons expected to meet entitlement requirements and require the services of: public assistance programs; state correctional institutions; state correctional non-institutional supervision; state institutions for juvenile offenders; the common school system; long-term care; medical assistance; foster care; and adoption support. It also forecasts the number of

students eligible for the College Bound Scholarship who are expected to attend an institution of higher education.

Summary of Bill:

The Legislature is required to provide the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (State Board) with a separate appropriation to provide basic education for adults. The amount of the appropriation must be determined by multiplying the total full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment in basic education for adults courses by the statewide average per FTE high school student allocation, multiplied by the following factors:

- for the 2015-16 academic year, the factor must be 0.5;
- for the 2016-17 academic year, the factor must be 0.6;
- for the 2017-18 academic year, the factor must be 0.7;
- for the 2018-19 academic year, the factor must be 0.8;
- for the 2019-20 academic year, the factor must be 0.9; and
- for the 2020-21 academic year and thereafter, the factor must be 1.

The State Board is required to submit a budget request each year to adjust their appropriation to ensure full funding for the actual number of FTE students who enroll in basic education for adults courses in the CTCs.

The Caseload Forecast Council is required to estimate the anticipated number of FTE students who will enroll in basic education for adults courses at CTCs.

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) This is a great education bill that provides basic education for adults who do not have high school diplomas or did not get all the education they should have to be ready for college. Over the next 20 years there will not be enough high school graduates to meet the job demand. By 2016, 70 percent of all available jobs will require a postsecondary credential. In 2014 the state served 51,000 basic education for adults students. Washington is nationally recognized for its basic education for adults, especially the I-Best program, the key to remaining on the forefront and making this work is a stable funding stream. This stable caseload funding model would allow increased access to basic education for adults by allowing the CTCs to hire more basic skills instructors. Basic education for adults does not draw any tuition and relies completely on the state for funding. When there is a lack of state funding, it is easier for the colleges to focus on students who pay tuition. Funding for basic

education for adults is much lower than higher education students or K-12 students. This funding forecast model would tie basic education for adults funding to an amount equivalent to high school students in the K-12 system by eventually bringing the rate up to the K-12 level.

Pierce College had a basic education for adults program that was funded by a grant. The grant money helped students get laptops and internet access for education that was half-based in the classroom and half online. Pierce College saw immediate results. Regular retention rates were 70 percent, but with this new program retention went up to 97 percent.

This bill saves the state millions of dollars because when adults do not have basic education, they end up on food stamps, commit crimes, or end up homeless. The cost of keeping people in prisons is far more expensive than training people in basic skills to help them become productive members of society.

Many adults have low basic education skills because of cultural restrictions. These basic education for adults programs help people get out of the cycle of living paycheck to paycheck. It helps people find a sustainable career by teaching them soft and hard skills, helping them register for college, and helping them find financial aid.

(Other) Prior to the recent recession, a report was published that talked about three major changes: (1) the lack of numeracy and literacy skills; (2) seismic changes in the economy to a technology-based economy requiring high skills; and (3) sweeping demographic changes. This bill brings forth an important conversation and aligns with the state's educational attainment goals.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Haler, prime sponsor; Jon Kerr and Nick Lutes, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Lori Griffin, Pierce College; Taleah Mitchell, Seattle Central College; and David Spring.

(Other) Maddy Thompson, Washington Student Achievement Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.