

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5295

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### As Reported by House Committee On: Higher Education

**Title:** An act relating to the dashboard for four-year institutions of higher education.

**Brief Description:** Concerning the display of campus information on the statewide public four-year dashboard.

**Sponsors:** Senators Kohl-Welles, Bailey, Liias, Becker, Frockt, Miloscia and Chase.

#### **Brief History:**

##### **Committee Activity:**

Higher Education: 3/25/15, 3/26/15 [DP].

#### **Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires the branch campuses of the four-year institutions to display data on the Statewide Public Four-Year Dashboard website within the Office of Financial Management.
- Requires the Education Research and Data Center to avoid publishing data to the maximum extent possible and to use alternatives when it is necessary to suppress data to protect student privacy.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Gregory, Hargrove, Holy, Reykdal, Sells, Stambaugh, Tarleton and Van Werven.

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

#### **Background:**

##### Office of Financial Management and the Education Research and Data Center.

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) provides fiscal services, information, and policy support for the Governor, Legislature, and state agencies. The OFM also conducts research and manages statewide data, including data related to higher education. In 2007 the

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Legislature created an education data center, known as the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), within the OFM to work on conducting collaborative analyses of early learning, K-12, and higher education. In 2011 the Legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1795, also known as the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which required the four-year institutions to begin reporting annually on specific performance data to the ERDC and for the data to be displayed on the OFM's website in a uniform dashboard format. This became the Statewide Public Four-Year Dashboard (Dashboard).

#### Statewide Public Four-Year Dashboard.

The six public four-year institutions of higher education in the state are required to submit data for a number of accountability measures to the OFM by December 1 each year. Data required to be submitted includes enrollment information, the number and types of degrees awarded, graduation rates, transfer rates, time and credits to degree, credit accumulation, retention rates, student debt load, market penetration, and much more. Data suppression refers to methods and restrictions used to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable information.

#### Performance Plans.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2011 also required the public four-year institutions to each negotiate an institutional performance plan with the OFM that includes performance goals to be achieved in the subsequent biennium. The authority to increase or decrease tuition rates must be considered within the context of these performance goals for the public four-year institutions. The expected outcomes the plan must include are:

- time and credits to degree;
- retention and success of students from low-income, diverse, or underrepresented communities;
- baccalaureate degree production for resident students; and
- degree production in high-demand programs of study and critical state need areas.

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#### **Summary of Bill:**

The branch campuses of the four-year institutions of higher education must also display data on the OFM's Dashboard website by December 1, 2015. The branch campus will not be considered separate from the main campus for the purpose of performance goals in higher education.

When it is necessary to use data suppression to protect student privacy, the ERDC must avoid redacting data to the maximum extent possible by using alternatives, such as combining data groupings or using the percentage of students in place of the specific number of students.

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**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) There is just one dashboard for each university or college, and a distinction is not made between the main and branch campuses. There was a concern that by displaying branch campus data on a separate dashboard, students might be more identifiable because the enrollment base is smaller in small areas. This was looked into, and there are still quite a few people. It was decided that the performance goals should be based on the institutions as a whole so the data would not be skewed because branch campuses are small, new, and serve a different segment of the population.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Chris Mulick, Washington State University; and Genesee Adkins, University of Washington.

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