
Higher Education Committee

SSB 5328

Brief Description: Disseminating financial aid information.

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

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the public baccalaureate institutions to provide financial aid application due dates and information in written or electronic form for prospective and admitted students.
- Encourages all institutions of higher education eligible to participate in the State Need Grant program to post financial aid application dates and distribution policies on their websites.

Hearing Date: 3/25/15

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Senate Bill 6358.

In 2014 the Legislature passed Senate Bill 6358 which required community and technical colleges to provide financial aid application due dates and information on whether or not financial aid will be awarded on a rolling basis to their admitted students at the time of acceptance. It also encouraged institutions of higher education to post financial aid application dates and distribution policies on their websites.

State Need Grant.

The State Need Grant (SNG) program was established in 1969 to assist financially needy or disadvantaged resident students attending a higher education institution. Only students with family incomes at or below 70 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, and who are enrolled in three to five credit-bearing quarter credits, or the equivalent

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semester credits, are eligible for the SNG. Eligible students can use the SNG at any Washington public two-year or four-year institution and at many accredited private, independent institutions and career schools in the state.

Financial Aid Information.

All higher education institutions publish their financial aid application process and policies on their website, in their catalogue and admission materials, and in emails to prospective and active students. All institutions also discuss this information during campus and new student orientations. Many institutions provide this material on postcards, letters, social media, and reader boards; at on- and off-campus events; and in-person interviews. Rolling financial aid refers to a large window of time in which to submit a financial aid application. Aid is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis rather than being determined for all applicants after a certain deadline.

Summary of Bill:

The public baccalaureate institutions must provide financial aid application due dates and information in written or electronic form for prospective and admitted students. In addition, all institutions of higher education eligible to participate in the State Need Grant program are encouraged to post financial aid application dates and distribution policies on their websites.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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