

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5851

As of February 25, 2015

Title: An act relating to recommendations of the college bound scholarship program work group.

Brief Description: Concerning recommendations of the college bound scholarship program work group.

Sponsors: Senators Frockt, Kohl-Welles, Miloscia, Liias, Mullet, Pedersen, Nelson and McAuliffe.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/19/15 [DPS-WM].
Ways & Means: 2/23/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5851 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chair; Baumgartner, Vice Chair; Kohl-Welles, Ranking Minority Member; Becker, Frockt, Liias and Miloscia.

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Staff: Michael Bezanson (786-7449)

Background: College Bound Scholarship (CBS) Program. In 2007 the Legislature created the CBS Program to provide a tuition scholarship program for low-income students. The scholarship is open to seventh and eighth graders who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches and sign a pledge to graduate from high school with a 2.0 grade point average or higher and no felony convictions. Students in foster care are automatically enrolled. At the time of high school graduation, eligible students must have a family income of 65 percent of the state median family income or below.

The CBS award amounts are calculated as the difference between public institution tuition and required fees, less the value of any state-funded grant, scholarship, or waiver assistance

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the student receives, plus \$500 for books. All scholarship recipients are limited to no more than four full-time years' worth of scholarship awards and the scholarship award must be used within five years of receipt.

The Office of Student Financial Aid, within the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), is the administrator of the Program. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must notify elementary, middle, and junior high schools about the Program and to work with WSAC to develop application collection and student tracking procedures. Currently OSPI contracts with the College Success Foundation to increase CBS middle and high school students' knowledge and awareness of post-secondary opportunities.

CBS Program Work Group. During the 2014 Session, the Legislature created a work group to make recommendations to ensure the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) program is viable, productive, and effective. The 11-member work group included two senators and two representatives. The work group met four times in 2014. The final report contains 12 recommendations for the CBS program within the following categories: data, student supports, communications, statutory changes, and funding.

Summary of Bill: The bill as referred to committee not considered.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Substitute): The Legislature finds that a comprehensive review of the CBS Program in 2014 resulted in unanimous recommendations to improve and enhance certain components of the program, including data collection, outreach, and program outcomes.

WSAC must:

- work with other state agencies, law enforcement, or the court system to verify that eligible students do not have felonies;
- develop comprehensive social media outreach with grade-level specific information to keep students on track to graduate and leverage current tools such as the High School and Beyond Plan and WSAC's Ready Set Grad website; and
- collaborate with educational organizations to map and coordinate mentoring and advising resources across the state, within existing resources.

Each college or university is encouraged to tailor advising resources for CBS recipients. The institutions should identify campus officials and other resources.

Beginning January 1, 2015, and at a minimum every year thereafter, WSAC and the colleges and universities must ensure that the data needed to analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the CBS program is promptly transmitted to the Education Research and Data Center. Data reported must include, but not be limited to the following:

- the number of students who sign up for the CBS program in seventh or eighth grade;
- the number of CBS students who graduate from high school;
- the number of CBS students who enroll in postsecondary education;
- persistence and completion rates of CBS recipients;
- CBS recipient GPA;
- the number of CBS recipients who did not remain eligible and why;
- CBS program costs; and

- impacts to the SNG program.

By December 1, 2018, the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) must complete an evaluation of the CBS program and report to the Legislature. WSIPP's report must complement studies on the CBS program by the University of Washington or others. To the extent it is not duplicative, the report must evaluate education outcomes emphasizing degree completion rates at both secondary and postsecondary levels. The report must study certain aspects of the CBS program, including but not limited to the following:

- CBS recipient GPA;
- variance in remediation between CBS recipients and their peers;
- differences in persistence between CBS recipients and their peers; and
- the impact of ineligibility for the CBS program, for reasons such as moving to Washington after middle school or a change in family income.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Substitute): Removes section 2, which includes language addressing the award amounts to students in private institutions and that recipients must enroll no later than the fall term one academic year following high school graduation. Clarifies that CBS data from WSAC and the institutions of higher education must be promptly transmitted to the Education Research and Data Center at a minimum every year, beginning January 1, 2015.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Proposed Substitute as Heard in Committee (Higher Education): PRO: The core of this bill is to improve outreach efforts to students around the state. We need more rigor to student supports. We also need really good data on the program. The Education Research and Data Center should receive all data. A small fiscal cost for a WSIPP study is worth it in the context of the amount of money spent on the program. We have initial evidence that CBS is making a difference in high school. Washington is only one of three states to offer a financial commitment to middle school students. The value in the CBS program is to provide hope for students, and it shows students a path. Indiana sends packets to all students with information to heighten awareness of postsecondary options. Becoming a scholar is a huge motivator to do well in school. High school counselors help students understand the value of a scholarship and the importance of deadlines, such as filing for the FAFSA.

Persons Testifying (Higher Education): PRO: Senator Frockt, prime sponsor; Frank Ordway, League of Education Voters; Paul Francis, Council of Presidents; Rachelle Sharpe, WSAC; Juliette Schindler Kelly, College Success Foundation; Anne Lee, College Bound Scholarship Scholar, Lindbergh High School.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Ways & Means): PRO: The CBS program is an incredible program. Initial research has shown that this is a great investment. The bill should provide better data so that the state can make directed investments in the program correctly. The bill comes from the CBS workgroup this summer and has shown tremendous success. The data reporting is needed to keep the investment appropriate and ensure dollars are spent correctly.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Frank Ordway, League of Education Voters; Paul Francis, Council of Presidents; Rachelle Sharpe, WA Student Achievement Council.