

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6354

As of January 26, 2016

Title: An act relating to adopting a higher education reverse transfer agreement plan.

Brief Description: Adopting a higher education reverse transfer agreement plan.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Baumgartner, Carlyle, Frockt and Bailey.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/26/16.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: Transfer in Washington is directed by several statutes and follows the *Policy on Intercollege Transfer and Articulation among Washington Public Colleges and Universities* adopted in 1986, and the *Transfer Task Force Transfer Agreement* adopted in 1994. Transfer policies are implemented and maintained through cooperative efforts of the public institutions of higher education, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC).

Direct Transfer Agreements. A student may complete a direct transfer agreement (DTA) pathway in math and science, or as part of a major related program. All courses required by these DTA pathways will transfer to every Washington public four-year institution and to many independent institutions participating in the agreement. If admitted into the four-year institution, the transfer student has junior standing.

Reverse Articulation. Reverse articulation allows eligible students to receive their associate degree after transferring to a baccalaureate institution. Students who transfer prior to completing their associate degree can complete any remaining requirements as part of their baccalaureate degree program and apply those credits back to the community or technical college (CTC) to receive their associate. The first reverse articulation agreement was signed between Western Governors University in Washington and the SBCTC in 2013. Since then, Eastern Washington University and Washington State University have also entered into reverse articulation agreements with local community colleges.

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.

Summary of Bill: The four-year institutions of higher education must work with the SBCTC to adopt a state plan for facilitating the reverse transfer of academic credits from four-year institutions to CTCs. The plan must include the following provisions:

- a policy allowing eligible students the opportunity to transfer credits from a four-year institutions back to a CTC, to use towards a two-year degree; and
- procedures for notifying eligible students of their eligibility in the program.

All transfer students who enroll as degree-seeking students at a four-year institution after completing at least 30 quarter credits at a CTC, but before attaining an associate degree, must be eligible for reverse transfer.

The SBCTC and four-year institutions must adopt the plan by December 31, 2017.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 18, 2016.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Among other institutions in the state, Eastern Washington University is already doing some innovative things with reverse transfer. Getting students credentials as they go along is important, and it is also important to get students a credential even if they don't finish their four-year degree. A coordinated state-wide approach would help meet state attainment goals and get students credentials. CTCs already have a system-wide Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for reverse transfer. A MOU is also in the works between CTCs and Eastern Washington University. It is important to note that four-year institutions have been working with CTCs on transfer issues for years. All four-year institutions are already doing reverse transfer in some capacity, but this bill would assist in engaging all institutions in developing a system-wide plan.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Lias, Prime Sponsor; Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents; Joe Holliday, SBCTC.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.