
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2820

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By House Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Pollet, Zeiger, Sells, Tarleton, Ortiz-Self, Ormsby, S. Hunt, Frame, Bergquist, Reykdal, Robinson, Fitzgibbon, McBride, Kilduff, Morris, Stanford, Walkinshaw, Farrell, Hudgins, Hickel, Goodman, and Santos)

READ FIRST TIME 02/05/16.

1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the Washington promise program,
2 which provides for universal and affordable access to community and
3 technical colleges; amending RCW 43.88C.010; adding a new chapter to
4 Title 28B RCW; creating a new section; and providing an effective
5 date.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The Washington promise program is
8 established to help make the first two years of college affordable
9 and accessible to all citizens of the state of Washington by offering
10 a tuition waiver for eligible students enrolled in associate degree
11 or certificate programs offered by Washington's community and
12 technical colleges. The purpose of the program is to encourage more
13 Washington residents who have not yet earned an associate degree to
14 enroll in and successfully complete an associate degree or
15 certificate that will lead to opportunities for further education and
16 jobs. By making a higher education credential more affordable and
17 accessible, Washington will make more progress towards attaining the
18 Washington student achievement council roadmap goal of having at
19 least seventy percent of Washington adults having a postsecondary
20 credential by 2023.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
2 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
3 otherwise.

4 (1) "Board" means the state board for community and technical
5 colleges.

6 (2) "Community or technical colleges" means the community or
7 technical colleges governed under chapter 28B.50 RCW.

8 (3) "Gift aid" means financial aid received from the federal Pell
9 grant, the state need grant program under chapter 28B.92 RCW, the
10 college bound scholarship program under chapter 28B.118 RCW, the
11 opportunity grant program under chapter 28B.50 RCW, the opportunity
12 scholarship program under chapter 28B.145 RCW, or any other state
13 grant or scholarship program that provides funds for educational
14 purposes with no obligation of repayment. Student loans and work
15 study programs are not included.

16 (4) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

17 (5) "Program" means the Washington promise program.

18 (6) "Resident student" means a student who is a resident student
19 as defined in RCW 28B.15.012.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The office shall administer the
21 Washington promise program for resident students seeking an
22 associate's degree or certificate from a community or technical
23 college under the terms and conditions in this section.

24 (2) To be eligible for the program, a resident student who has
25 not previously earned an associate degree must be admitted to an
26 eligible degree or certificate program as provided in subsection (9)
27 of this section at a community or technical college, regardless of
28 the student's age.

29 (3) Students must complete the free application for federal
30 student aid or the Washington application for state financial aid
31 each academic year in which they seek eligibility for the program.

32 (4) To remain eligible for the program, once a student has earned
33 forty-five credits, the student must maintain a cumulative grade
34 point average of 2.0.

35 (5) A student may be eligible for the program until one of the
36 following events occurs:

37 (a) The student has earned an associate degree or credential
38 under this chapter;

39 (b) The student has earned one hundred twenty credits; or

1 (c) Four calendar years have passed since the student first began
2 receiving benefits under this chapter.

3 (6) For the 2017-18 academic year, eligible students must:

4 (a) Have graduated high school within the past six calendar
5 months; and

6 (b) Have a family income that does not exceed seventy percent of
7 the state median family income.

8 (7) Beginning with the 2018-19 academic year, eligible students
9 must have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent within the
10 past sixteen calendar months.

11 (8) Beginning with the 2020-21 academic year, an eligible student
12 must have obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent.

13 (9) An eligible degree or certificate program is limited to:

14 (a) An associate degree;

15 (b) Academic programs with credits that can fully transfer via
16 articulation agreement toward a baccalaureate degree or
17 postbaccalaureate degree at an institution of higher education; or

18 (c) Professional and technical programs that lead to a recognized
19 postsecondary credential.

20 (10)(a) The office shall award grants to students eligible under
21 this section for an amount up to the cost of tuition and fees as
22 defined in RCW 28B.15.020, and services and activities fees as
23 defined in RCW 28B.15.041, less all other gift aid. The student shall
24 also receive a cost of attendance stipend if the student meets the
25 criteria in (b) of this subsection. The calculation in this
26 subsection (10)(a) shall not result in the reduction of gift aid.

27 (b) Up to one thousand five hundred dollars for books and other
28 related higher education expenses must be provided as a stipend to
29 students with a family income that does not exceed seventy percent of
30 the state median family income. If a student eligible for the stipend
31 under this subsection (10)(b) is enrolled less than full time, the
32 student must receive a prorated portion of the stipend based on the
33 number of credits in which the student is enrolled.

34 (11) By December 1, 2016, and annually by December 1st
35 thereafter, the board shall report to the appropriate policy and
36 fiscal committees of the legislature on the following impacts of the
37 program:

38 (a) Student enrollment in the eligible degree or certificate
39 programs defined in subsection (9) of this section;

- 1 (b) Student completion rates of credits, certificates, and
- 2 degrees;
- 3 (c) The cost of implementation, including the cost per student;
- 4 (d) Additional resources used to meet student needs, such as
- 5 counseling, precollege courses, child care, or transportation; and
- 6 (e) The number of students receiving wraparound services, the
- 7 number of schools providing wraparound services, and the resources
- 8 needed to provide wraparound services.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** The board shall develop a plan to provide
10 all Washington promise program students who are enrolled at a
11 community or technical college with a quarter-long student success
12 course, during or before their first enrollment period, that teaches
13 essential skills for college success. Essential skills may include
14 tips for study habits and time management, financial aid information
15 and resources, connecting students with advisors, encouraging student
16 mentoring, helping establish student cohorts, and providing
17 information about services available on campus. The plan must address
18 how the board will ensure that students receiving a Washington
19 promise program grant are enrolled in such a course during or before
20 their first quarter of eligibility. The board shall provide the plan
21 to the relevant committees of the legislature by December 1, 2017,
22 and begin implementation of the plan for the 2018-19 academic year.

23 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The Washington state institute for public
24 policy shall conduct a study on the effectiveness of the program,
25 including but not limited to: Any increase in enrollments in
26 community or technical colleges; any decreases in enrollments
27 elsewhere in institutions of higher education; changes in student
28 persistence, completion, and time-to-degree rates in eligible degree
29 or certificate programs; and any change in need or delivery of
30 student services. The analysis shall include the fiscal impact of the
31 program on the students, community and technical colleges, and state.
32 The institute shall report its findings to the relevant committees of
33 the legislature by December 1, 2020.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The caseload forecast council shall
35 estimate the anticipated caseload of the program and submit this
36 forecast as required in RCW 43.88C.020.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The board may adopt rules to implement
2 this chapter.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** This act may be known and cited as the
4 Washington promise program.

5 **Sec. 9.** RCW 43.88C.010 and 2015 c 128 s 2 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) The caseload forecast council is hereby created. The council
8 shall consist of two individuals appointed by the governor and four
9 individuals, one of whom is appointed by the chairperson of each of
10 the two largest political caucuses in the senate and house of
11 representatives. The chair of the council shall be selected from
12 among the four caucus appointees. The council may select such other
13 officers as the members deem necessary.

14 (2) The council shall employ a caseload forecast supervisor to
15 supervise the preparation of all caseload forecasts. As used in this
16 chapter, "supervisor" means the caseload forecast supervisor.

17 (3) Approval by an affirmative vote of at least five members of
18 the council is required for any decisions regarding employment of the
19 supervisor. Employment of the supervisor shall terminate after each
20 term of three years. At the end of the first year of each three-year
21 term the council shall consider extension of the supervisor's term by
22 one year. The council may fix the compensation of the supervisor. The
23 supervisor shall employ staff sufficient to accomplish the purposes
24 of this section.

25 (4) The caseload forecast council shall oversee the preparation
26 of and approve, by an affirmative vote of at least four members, the
27 official state caseload forecasts prepared under RCW 43.88C.020. If
28 the council is unable to approve a forecast before a date required in
29 RCW 43.88C.020, the supervisor shall submit the forecast without
30 approval and the forecast shall have the same effect as if approved
31 by the council.

32 (5) A councilmember who does not cast an affirmative vote for
33 approval of the official caseload forecast may request, and the
34 supervisor shall provide, an alternative forecast based on
35 assumptions specified by the member.

36 (6) Members of the caseload forecast council shall serve without
37 additional compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses
38 in accordance with RCW 44.04.120 while attending sessions of the

1 council or on official business authorized by the council.
2 Nonlegislative members of the council shall be reimbursed for travel
3 expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

4 (7) "Caseload," as used in this chapter, means:

5 (a) The number of persons expected to meet entitlement
6 requirements and require the services of public assistance programs,
7 state correctional institutions, state correctional noninstitutional
8 supervision, state institutions for juvenile offenders, the common
9 school system, long-term care, medical assistance, foster care, and
10 adoption support;

11 (b) The number of students who are eligible for the Washington
12 college bound scholarship program and are expected to attend an
13 institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.92.030;

14 (c) The number of students who are eligible for the Washington
15 promise program and are expected to attend a community or technical
16 college as defined in section 2 of this act;

17 (d) The number of children who are eligible, as defined in RCW
18 43.215.405, to participate in, and the number of children actually
19 served by, the early childhood education and assistance program.

20 (8) The caseload forecast council shall forecast the temporary
21 assistance for needy families and the working connections child care
22 programs as a courtesy.

23 (9) The caseload forecast council shall forecast youth
24 participating in the extended foster care program pursuant to RCW
25 74.13.031 separately from other children who are residing in foster
26 care and who are under eighteen years of age.

27 (10) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the
28 definitions provided in RCW 43.88.020 apply to this chapter.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** Sections 1 through 8 and 11 of this act
30 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** This act takes effect July 1, 2016.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** If specific funding for the purposes of
33 this act, referencing this act by bill or chapter number, is not
34 provided by June 30, 2016, in the omnibus appropriations act, this
35 act is null and void.

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