
SENATE BILL 5547

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2015 Regular Session

By Senators Bailey, Rivers, Angel, Becker, Warnick, Honeyford, and Padden

Read first time 01/23/15. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring a minimum grade point average or
2 equivalent to renew a state need grant; and amending RCW 28B.92.060.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.060 and 2012 c 229 s 558 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially
7 as follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be
8 construed to prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound
9 discretion, from following another procedure when the best interest
10 of the program so dictates:

11 (1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award
12 recipients from among Washington residents applying for student
13 financial aid who have been ranked according to:

14 (a) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family
15 contribution; and

16 (b) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former
17 foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an
18 associate of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

19 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be
20 met by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until
21 the total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are

1 declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until
2 disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured
3 receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year
4 institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board
5 for community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria
6 and methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely
7 rely on a first-come, first-served basis.

8 (3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for
9 up to five years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of five
10 years, or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the published
11 length of time of the student's program. A student may not start a
12 new associate degree program as a state need grant recipient until at
13 least five years have elapsed since earning an associate degree as a
14 need grant recipient, except that a student may earn two associate
15 degrees concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will include
16 maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an
17 eligible program as determined by the office and maintaining at least
18 a 2.5 grade point average except for those students attending The
19 Evergreen State College. Students enrolled at The Evergreen State
20 College must meet the requirements of the college's satisfactory
21 academic progress policy for state financial aid to remain qualified.
22 Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any reason
23 during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant shall be
24 returned to the state educational grant fund by the institution
25 according to the institution's own policy for issuing refunds, except
26 as provided in RCW 28B.92.070.

27 (4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a
28 maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount
29 equal to the total maximum student expense budget at the public
30 institutions plus the current average state appropriation per student
31 for operating expense in the public institutions. Any child support
32 payments received by students who are parents attending less than
33 half-time shall not be used in computing financial need.

34 (5)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
35 quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a
36 grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that
37 leads to a degree or certificate.

38 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis
39 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for

1 any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-
2 full-time basis, as long as funds are available.

3 (c) An institution of higher education may award a state need
4 grant to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
5 quarter credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis
6 if:

7 (i) The student has not previously received a state need grant
8 from that institution;

9 (ii) The student completes the required free application for
10 federal student aid;

11 (iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial
12 condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the
13 student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student
14 is likely eligible for a state need grant; and

15 (iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that
16 the financial information provided on the free application for
17 federal student aid and any additional financial information provided
18 directly to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the
19 student agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the
20 student submitted false or incomplete information.

21 (6) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means a person
22 who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than twenty-four
23 years of age, who was a dependent of the department of social and
24 health services at the time he or she attained the age of eighteen.

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