
SENATE BILL 5636

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Senators Hasegawa, Kohl-Welles, Chase, Keiser, and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/27/15. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the GET ready for college program; adding a
2 new section to chapter 28B.95 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that education is
5 the single most important investment a state can make to ensure that
6 it remains globally competitive. The legislature, Washington
7 citizens, education leaders and practitioners, and students must take
8 collective responsibility to ensure that all qualified citizens have
9 the opportunity to succeed in a world-class, learner-focused,
10 seamless education. The legislature further finds that lifelong
11 learning is a fundamental value of a civil society, the state of
12 Washington, and the primary family of its students.

13 The legislature also finds that early investment in a student can
14 make the difference in the student's aspiration and commitment.
15 Research indicates that students form attitudes about going to
16 college as early as elementary school. If policymakers want to
17 increase participation in the state's apprenticeship programs,
18 colleges, and universities, outreach efforts must begin early and
19 occur often.

20 Saving for college is one way a student's family and extended
21 community can ensure that financial obstacles will not prevent a

1 child from realizing the dream of going to college. A modest
2 financial investment by the state of Washington to initiate a college
3 savings plan will contribute to the success of students in achieving
4 their educational aspirations and will benefit the state's goal of
5 educating more students to higher levels of education.

6 Therefore, the legislature intends to encourage families to begin
7 saving for college by paying the enrollment fee for a GET account and
8 one GET unit for each child born in Washington or a child who moves
9 to Washington, enrolls in a public school, and establishes a domicile
10 in Washington, and supplementing that account with additional GET
11 units over the child's educational career. This action plants the
12 seed, early on, that going to college is possible, regardless of
13 socioeconomic status. It also plants the seed that saving for college
14 is important and provides an easy way to begin saving.

15 Furthermore, the legislature finds that providing two years of
16 postsecondary education will create considerable savings for the
17 state need grant and college bound scholarship programs.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.95
19 RCW to read as follows:

20 (1) The GET ready for college program is established. Subject to
21 funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the office shall pay
22 for the fifty dollar enrollment fee and for one GET unit to open a
23 GET account on behalf of:

24 (a) Every child born in Washington state after the effective date
25 of this section; and

26 (b) Any child born after the effective date of this section, who
27 subsequently moves to Washington state and enrolls in a public
28 school, if one or both of the child's parents or legal guardians have
29 maintained a bona fide domicile in the state of Washington for at
30 least one year.

31 (2) In carrying out this duty, the office shall:

32 (a) Develop and implement a process for establishing the accounts
33 and account beneficiaries;

34 (b) Establish rules for implementing the program;

35 (c) Provide information to hospitals, clinics, physicians and
36 nurse practitioners, birthing centers, community organizations,
37 school districts, and institutions of higher education regarding the
38 program, the state's offer to pay the enrollment fee to open an

1 account, the one unit minimum purchase requirement, and the program
2 benefits and limitations; and

3 (d) Accept grants and donations from private sources to match
4 state funds appropriated for the GET ready for college program.

5 (3) Children who have a GET account opened under the GET ready
6 for college program shall have deposited into that account additional
7 GET units upon the child reaching educational milestones. The office
8 shall purchase GET units to be owned and held in trust by the office
9 and distribute units to individual, personally owned accounts upon
10 the child achieving the following:

11 (a) Upon entry into kindergarten, ten units;

12 (b) Upon completion of the fourth grade statewide academic
13 assessments for reading, writing, and mathematics, twenty units. The
14 child does not need to meet the state standard to receive the GET
15 units;

16 (c) Upon completion of the fifth grade, thirty units;

17 (d) Upon completion of the eighth grade, forty units;

18 (e) Upon completion of the ninth grade, fifteen units;

19 (f) Upon completion of the tenth grade, fifteen units;

20 (g) Upon completion of the eleventh grade, twenty units; and

21 (h) Upon graduation from a Washington state public high school,
22 fifty units.

23 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
24 enter into any necessary data-sharing agreements with the office to
25 facilitate implementation of this section.

26 (5) The office shall develop necessary forms, policies, and
27 procedures to provide parents or guardians the ability to voluntarily
28 waive any privacy rights to facilitate the exchange of personal
29 information between the common schools and the office for
30 implementation of this section.

31 (6) The GET ready for college account is created in the custody
32 of the state treasurer. The office shall deposit into the account all
33 moneys received for the GET ready for college program from
34 appropriations and private sources. Only the director of the office
35 or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the
36 account. Expenditures from the account, not to exceed five percent,
37 may be used by the office to carry out the provisions of this

1 section. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter
2 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

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