
SENATE BILL 6512

State of Washington

64th Legislature

2016 Regular Session

By Senators Baumgartner and Conway

Read first time 01/22/16. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to requiring that a percentage of state need
2 grant recipients be pursuing degrees in STEM subjects; and amending
3 RCW 28B.92.060.

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

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

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

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

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

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

20 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be
21 met by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until

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

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

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

31 (5) Beginning in the 2016-17 academic year, at least twenty-five
32 percent of the funding appropriated for state need grants shall be
33 awarded to students pursuing degrees in STEM subjects as defined in
34 RCW 28A.188.010. The office shall report annually beginning January
35 1, 2017, on the percentage of students receiving state need grants
36 who are pursuing degrees in STEM subjects.

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

1 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis
2 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for
3 any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-
4 full-time basis, as long as funds are available.

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

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

11 (ii) The student completes the required free application for
12 federal student aid;

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

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

23 ~~((+6+))~~ (7) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means
24 a person who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than
25 twenty-four years of age, who was a dependent of the department of
26 social and health services at the time he or she attained the age of
27 eighteen.

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