

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1375

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Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Providing students at community and technical colleges with the costs of required course materials.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Van Werven, Tarleton, Orwall, Griffey, Haler, Holy, McCabe, Young, Dent, Riccelli, Bergquist, Buys, Kraft, Kagi, Ryu, Muri, Goodman, Lovick, Frame and Hargrove).

House Committee on Higher Education
House Committee on Appropriations
Senate Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Background:

Higher Education Opportunity Act.

The federal government passed the Higher Education Opportunity Act (Act) in 2008, which required institutions of higher education receiving federal assistance to post textbook costs and information on their Internet course schedule, such as the International Student Book Number (ISBN) and retail price. However, if the disclosure is not considered practicable, the institution may state "To be determined." The Act also required the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to study the implementation of this requirement. In a 2013 study, the GAO found that 81 percent of schools sampled provided textbook information online. Washington passed a similar textbook law in 2006.

Washington's Course Material Price and Information Disclosure Law.

The institutions of higher education are required to have rules to ensure their affiliated bookstores:

- provide students with the option of purchasing materials that are unbundled when possible;
- disclose to faculty and staff the costs to students;
- disclose publicly how new editions vary from previous editions;
- actively promote and publicize buy-back programs;
- disclose retail costs for course materials on a per course basis to faculty, staff, and the public; and

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- disclose information to students regarding the titles, authors, editions, prices, and ISBN at least four weeks before the start of class for required course materials.

Faculty and staff are to consider the least costly practices in assigning course material, such as using the least expensive edition available, using free online web and library sources, or using free, open source textbooks when available.

The ctcLink System.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (State Board) has begun implementing a single, centralized software system for each of the 34 community and technical colleges (CTCs) in which students, faculty, and staff will have access to a variety of tools online. The ctcLink system has been implemented at Tacoma Community College, Spokane Falls Community College, and Spokane Community College thus far.

Summary:

To the maximum extent practicable, but no later than the first full quarter after a CTC has implemented the ctcLink system, the CTC must provide information on: (a) the cost of any required textbook or other course materials; and (b) whether the course uses open educational resources. The information must be displayed in the online course description or by providing a link that connects to the bookstore's website or other website. If a faculty member has not yet been assigned to a course, the costs of that course's textbooks and course materials do not have to be displayed. Once the faculty member is assigned, the costs must be displayed as soon as feasible.

The CTCs are required to report to the State Board on which courses provided textbooks' and course materials' costs to students during registration and what percent of total classes this equaled. The State Board must report the information to the Legislature by January 1 of each biennium, beginning January 1, 2019.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0
Senate	49	0

Effective: July 23, 2017