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HOUSE BILL 1651

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State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Pollet, Doglio, Kilduff, Gregerson, Peterson, Frame, Bergquist, Orwall, Goodman, Fey, Haler, and Stanford

Read first time 01/25/17. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to supporting students' success by increasing  
2 retention and graduation rates with evidence-based programs; adding a  
3 new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; adding a new section to chapter  
4 28B.50 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28B.77 RCW; adding a new  
5 section to chapter 28B.20 RCW; creating a new section; and making an  
6 appropriation.

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

8 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1)(a) The legislature recognizes that  
9 student success is often a product of a good support system, and the  
10 legislature finds that student supports such as academic and career  
11 advising, tutors, cohort-based classes, peer mentor programs, and  
12 orientation programs can help students achieve their dream of a  
13 postsecondary education. The legislature finds that student retention  
14 term-to-term and year-to-year significantly increases when students  
15 attend required orientation programs or enroll in student success  
16 courses. Orientation programs and student success courses help new  
17 and transfer students become familiar with the institution and its  
18 resources, and offer students opportunities to develop relationships  
19 with their peers and faculty, thereby creating a sense of community.  
20 Student success courses also teach students about study skills, the  
21 expectations of college, and potential career pathways.

1 (b) Investment in student success programs promotes timely  
2 graduation, which is a cost benefit to the student who pays less  
3 tuition and can enter the workforce faster, and to the state, which  
4 has reduced operating costs. In addition, college graduates earn more  
5 over their lifetime than high school graduates, while federal, state,  
6 and local governments enjoy increased tax revenues, less dependence  
7 on social programs, and more civic engagement.

8 (2) The legislature finds that there are effective, evidence-  
9 based examples of student success programs here in Washington state.  
10 Some examples of those programs include:

11 (a) Columbia Basin College requires mandatory academic advising  
12 and required enrollment in Human Development 101 for all students who  
13 test into two or more remedial areas. The class is focused on  
14 creating academic success by teaching students about learning  
15 strategies, campus tools and resources, and how to develop an  
16 academic plan to support their career and educational goals. For both  
17 the 2012 and 2013 cohorts, students who took the class had higher  
18 rates of retention than students with remedial needs who did not take  
19 the class.

20 (b) Summer Bridge is a program offered by the University of  
21 Washington-Tacoma to incoming freshmen who take an intensive, one-  
22 month long university course for college credit. The course gives  
23 students the tools they need to be successful, including academic and  
24 financial aid advising, academic enhancement workshops, and peer  
25 mentoring from sophomores, and provides opportunities to engage in  
26 community service and receive career development information.  
27 Students who participate in bridge programs are more likely to  
28 succeed in college compared to students who do not participate.

29 (c) TRiO is a program for student support services that increases  
30 access and success for low-income and first generation students, and  
31 students with disabilities, at the community and technical college  
32 level. The program helps students complete their associate degree and  
33 successfully transfer to a four-year institution. TRiO services  
34 include academic advising, counseling, mentoring, academic planning,  
35 financial aid guidance, tutoring, library resources and textbook  
36 rentals, and tours of four-year institutions.

37 (d) Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) is a  
38 nationally recognized program that supports and encourages  
39 underrepresented students in an associate's program to pursue four-  
40 year degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics

1 (STEM) fields. MESA provides students with an orientation course,  
2 academic workshops, academic advising, a designated study center for  
3 students to work together, assistance with transferring to a four-  
4 year university, and direct administrative support. Many of the  
5 students also have internships with industry partners or speak at  
6 conferences about their research. According to Washington MESA, for  
7 the first MESA graduating class of 2011-12, one hundred percent of  
8 the students who earned bachelor's degrees majored in STEM fields.  
9 Seattle Central College MESA students who transfer to a four-year  
10 university to pursue a STEM degree graduate at one hundred percent,  
11 compared to non-MESA students who graduate at ninety percent.

12 (e) The state board for community and technical colleges'  
13 Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) program is  
14 nationally recognized for its team teaching model of providing both  
15 remedial education and career education concurrently, thereby  
16 accelerating students' progress. An evaluation from the Community  
17 College Research Center in December 2012 found three key facts: (i)  
18 The highly structured I-BEST programs focus students' decisions and  
19 support retention; (ii) I-BEST cohorts have higher rates of  
20 performance; and (iii) on average, I-BEST students earned eighteen  
21 credits compared to non-I-BEST workforce students who only earned  
22 nine credits. A cost-benefit analysis of the program indicates that  
23 while the I-BEST program costs more and the state funds the program  
24 at a rate of 1.75 times the normal rate for a full-time equivalent  
25 student, the return on investment justifies the cost.

26 (3) The legislature recognizes that the institutions of higher  
27 education have an intent to increase student supports as illustrated  
28 by the following examples from their budget requests:

29 (a) Eastern Washington University's request to create advising  
30 teams, which includes hiring a student success advisor for each  
31 department who would focus on those students in danger of not  
32 graduating;

33 (b) Central Washington University's request to develop four full-  
34 service transfer student centers around the state to provide  
35 advising, career guidance, tutoring, mentoring, and social support  
36 for transfer students at campuses in Ellensburg, Des Moines,  
37 Lynnwood, and Joint Base Lewis-McChord;

38 (c) Western Washington University's request to improve the campus  
39 tutoring center by hiring more peer tutors and increasing staff  
40 resources, to hire a mathematics liaison to optimize collaboration

1 between the mathematics department and the tutoring center, and to  
2 provide tutor-led entry level mathematics student groups in the  
3 residence halls;

4 (d) The Evergreen State College's request to expand peer  
5 mentoring to all first-time, first-year students, and to double the  
6 First Peoples Scholars program, which brings first-year and transfer  
7 students to campus before orientation to focus on building community;

8 (e) The University of Washington's requests to expand staff and  
9 peer tutoring for STEM programs, implement a summer bridge program at  
10 the Seattle campus while expanding the summer bridge program at the  
11 Tacoma campus, implement a university 101 student success course at  
12 the Tacoma campus, and hire an additional staff person to improve  
13 college bound scholarship students' success by helping students  
14 develop effective learning strategies, study skills, and financial  
15 literacy while receiving proactive academic counseling; and

16 (f) The state board for community and technical colleges' request  
17 to expand the I-BEST program by an additional nine hundred students  
18 annually for the 2017-2019 biennium, and to expand the current six  
19 MESA pilot programs to all thirty-four community and technical  
20 colleges across the state.

21 (4) Recognizing the evidence-based examples of student support  
22 programs currently available, and the institutions' intent to provide  
23 additional supports, it is the legislature's intent to provide a  
24 framework to expand student supports.

25 (5) The legislature also recognizes that an unintended  
26 consequence of reduced state support for the research universities,  
27 coupled with increased tuition, has led to fifty-five percent of all  
28 graduate and professional degree programs at the University of  
29 Washington becoming fee-based, self-sustaining programs. These fee-  
30 based, self-sustaining graduate programs do not offer lower in-state  
31 tuition to Washington residents and may not be eligible for certain  
32 financial aid programs. The increased cost of these fee-based, self-  
33 sustaining graduate programs leads to decreased diversity, increased  
34 student loan debt, and a decrease in the availability of students  
35 willing to enter traditionally low-compensated occupations, such as  
36 public service professions in the areas of public health,  
37 librarianship, information services, and social work. Therefore, the  
38 legislature intends for the public service graduate conditional grant  
39 program to provide a long-term reinvestment that will enable

1 Washington residents to obtain graduate degrees necessary for public  
2 service careers.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.10  
4 RCW to read as follows:

5 By the beginning of the 2018-19 academic year, the four-year  
6 institutions of higher education shall implement a student success  
7 program for all students who are receiving need-based federal or  
8 state grant aid. The student success program must take the form of a  
9 credit-based class, orientation program, or peer mentoring program  
10 that is based on research or documented evidence of success at other  
11 institutions with comparable student populations. The student success  
12 program may include elements of:

13 (1) Learning about study skills, time management, and college  
14 success skills;

15 (2) Academic advising and career planning;

16 (3) Basic financial literacy and information and requirements for  
17 financial aid, including student loan programs and debt, particularly  
18 for students from cultural or economic backgrounds with limited  
19 knowledge of student loans and debt;

20 (4) Acclimating students to the institution's campus, resources,  
21 services, and culture, including the expectations and demands of  
22 postsecondary education;

23 (5) Tutoring or peer tutoring;

24 (6) Cohort-based programs; and

25 (7) Peer mentorship.

26 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50  
27 RCW to read as follows:

28 By the beginning of the 2018-19 academic year, the community and  
29 technical colleges shall implement the following for all students  
30 enrolled in a degree-granting program:

31 (1) A student success program that is either a credit-based  
32 class, orientation program, or peer mentoring program that is based  
33 on research or documented evidence of success at other institutions  
34 with comparable student populations. The student success program may  
35 include elements of:

36 (a) Learning about study skills, time management, and college  
37 success skills;

38 (b) Academic advising and career planning;

1 (c) Basic financial literacy and information and requirements for  
2 financial aid, including student loan programs and debt, particularly  
3 for students from cultural or economic backgrounds with limited  
4 knowledge of student loans and debt;

5 (d) Acclimating students to the institution's campus, resources,  
6 services, and culture, including the expectations and demands of  
7 postsecondary education;

8 (e) Tutoring or peer tutoring;

9 (f) Cohort-based programs; and

10 (g) Peer mentorship;

11 (2) An evidence-based remedial program, such as the integrated  
12 basic education and skills training program, for those students with  
13 remedial mathematics or English education needs. The remedial program  
14 may include elements of:

15 (a) Team teaching;

16 (b) Mixed basic skills and college-level curriculum;

17 (c) Accelerated basic skills curriculum; and

18 (d) Flipped classroom instruction.

19 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.77  
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 Subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this specific  
22 purpose, the council shall administer a competitive grant program to  
23 award grants to the institutions of higher education and nonprofit  
24 organizations that partner with the institutions of higher education  
25 to provide precollege or ongoing peer mentoring by the 2018-19  
26 academic year. The council shall prioritize grant proposals that  
27 assist underrepresented, low-income, or first-generation college  
28 students. The peer mentoring programs must focus on increasing  
29 retention and graduation rates. The council shall develop  
30 requirements for the grant program, including an application process,  
31 criteria for awards, and a review process. Each institution of higher  
32 education that receives a grant under this section may provide space  
33 free of charge to the partner nonprofit organization providing  
34 mentoring services on campus. The institutions of higher education  
35 that receive a grant under this section may use state work-study  
36 funds for training and supporting student mentors as a part of the  
37 partnership created under this section, provided that students meet  
38 eligibility requirements in RCW 28B.12.060.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 5.**    A new section is added to chapter 28B.77  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1)    The council shall contract with the western interstate  
4    commission for higher education to conduct an evaluation of the  
5    following:

6        (a)    The student success programs and remedial programs  
7    implemented at the institutions of higher education as required under  
8    sections 2 and 3 of this act. The evaluation must review the  
9    effectiveness of the programs based on the following measures of  
10   success:

- 11        (i)    Improves student retention;
- 12        (ii)    Improves graduation rates;
- 13        (iii)    Reduces time to degree;
- 14        (iv)    Reduces barriers to degree completion;
- 15        (v)    Targets student populations with the most need;
- 16        (vi)    Is cost-effective; and
- 17        (vii)    Specifically for the remedial programs, reduces time spent  
18    in remedial classes and improves students' basic skills to create  
19    pathways to high-demand degree fields; and

20        (b)    The competitive grant program for peer mentoring created  
21    under section 4 of this act, including:

22        (i)    A description of the grant programs funded and who is being  
23    served;

24        (ii)    Anecdotal and empirical data, including the following  
25    measures of success:

- 26        (A)    Improves student retention;
- 27        (B)    Improves graduation rates;
- 28        (C)    Reduces time to degree;
- 29        (D)    Reduces barriers to degree completion;
- 30        (E)    Targets student populations with the most need; and
- 31        (F)    Is cost-effective; and
- 32        (iii)    Which grant programs show greatest improvement in the  
33    measures of success.

34        (2)    After the evaluation, the council and the state board for  
35    community and technical colleges, in consultation with the western  
36    interstate commission for higher education, shall include  
37    recommendations on how the student success, remedial, and grant  
38    programs may be improved. For the community and technical colleges,  
39    if the evaluation indicates that certain student success and remedial  
40    programs outperform others based on the measures of success, the

1 state board for community and technical colleges shall coordinate  
2 with the community and technical colleges affected to change less  
3 effective programs to those found to be more effective.

4 (3) In response to the council's recommendations, the four-year  
5 institutions of higher education shall coordinate with the council to  
6 indicate how the institutions will make adjustments to their student  
7 success programs to improve the measures of success.

8 (4) A report on the evaluation, recommendations, and  
9 institutions' responses is due to the legislature by October 1, 2021,  
10 and October 1st every four years thereafter, to the appropriate  
11 higher education committees of the legislature and in accordance with  
12 the reporting requirements in RCW 43.01.036.

13 (5) The council shall take into account the results of the  
14 evaluation when funding grant programs in the future.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.77  
16 RCW to read as follows:

17 (1) The council shall contract with the western interstate  
18 commission for higher education to conduct an evaluation on mental  
19 health counseling and services provided for students at the  
20 institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016. This  
21 evaluation must include a description of:

22 (a) How these services are provided;

23 (b) How the services are funded and at what capacity the services  
24 are funded;

25 (c) How many students are being served and the types of students  
26 being served;

27 (d) Whether students have immediate access to services and, if  
28 not, the average wait time for services; and

29 (e) Any additional information that provides a picture of the  
30 current needs and demands for mental health services at the  
31 institutions of higher education.

32 (2) A report on the evaluation of mental health counseling and  
33 services is due to the appropriate committees of the legislature by  
34 September 1, 2018, and in accordance with the reporting requirements  
35 in RCW 43.01.036.

36 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.20  
37 RCW to read as follows:



1 (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this  
2 section.

3 (a) "Conditional grant" means a loan that is forgiven in whole or  
4 in part in exchange for service in a public service career in  
5 Washington.

6 (b) "Eligible student" means a student who is accepted into a  
7 public service fee-based, self-sustaining graduate program, is a  
8 resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012 and 28B.15.013, and has  
9 a declared intention to complete an approved public service-oriented  
10 fee-based, self-sustaining graduate program.

11 (c) "Equalization fee" means the additional amount added to the  
12 conditional grant under this section to equate the debt to that which  
13 the student would have incurred if he or she would have received a  
14 loan through the federal direct loan program.

15 (d) "Forgiven" or "to forgive" or "forgiveness" means to render  
16 service in a public service career in the state of Washington in lieu  
17 of monetary repayment.

18 (e) "Participant" means an eligible student who has received a  
19 conditional grant under this section.

20 (f) "Public service" includes employment with a public agency,  
21 public entity, or a nonprofit organization, and careers in the fields  
22 of librarianship, information services, public health, social work,  
23 and research and teaching in public service programs.

24 (g) "Satisfied" means paid-in-full.

25 (2) The public service graduate degree conditional grant program  
26 is created at the University of Washington. The University of  
27 Washington shall administer the program and has the following  
28 responsibilities:

29 (a) To adopt necessary rules and develop guidelines to administer  
30 the program;

31 (b) To collect and manage repayments from participants who do not  
32 meet their service obligations;

33 (c) To accept grants and donations from public and private  
34 sources for the program;

35 (d) To publicize the program; and

36 (e) To select eligible students to receive conditional grants  
37 based on an application process and selection criteria established by  
38 the University of Washington. The selection criteria must emphasize  
39 whether the eligible student has financial need, is a first-  
40 generation college student, is from a traditionally underrepresented

1 population, and the student's commitment to public service, including  
2 a commitment to working in underserved communities for which  
3 recruitment of credentialed professionals is difficult.

4 (3) To receive a conditional grant, the recipient must maintain  
5 enrollment and make satisfactory progress toward completion of his or  
6 her graduate degree.

7 (4) The University of Washington may award conditional grants to  
8 eligible students from the funds appropriated to the university for  
9 this purpose, from any private donations, or any other funds given to  
10 the university for this program. The amount of the conditional grant  
11 awarded to a participant may not exceed the difference between the  
12 fees charged for the participant's public service fee-based, self-  
13 sustaining graduate degree program and a similar graduate degree  
14 program's in-state tuition and fees at the University of Washington.  
15 If there is no similar tuition-based program at the University of  
16 Washington, a similar program at a peer public institution of higher  
17 education should be used.

18 (5) A participant in the conditional grant program incurs an  
19 obligation to repay the conditional grant, as a loan with interest  
20 and an equalization fee, unless:

21 (a) He or she is employed in a public service field in Washington  
22 for five years following graduation, under rules adopted by the  
23 University of Washington; or

24 (b) He or she receives the conditional grant in the form of a  
25 research assistantship or teaching assistantship with an applicable  
26 department at the University of Washington in a similar field as  
27 their graduate degree. A research assistantship or teaching  
28 assistantship funded under this program is subject to any collective  
29 bargaining agreements between graduate students and the University of  
30 Washington.

31 (6) In developing the repayment requirements for a conditional  
32 grant that is converted into a loan, the terms and conditions of the  
33 loan must follow the interest rate and repayment terms of the federal  
34 direct subsidized loan program. In addition, the University of  
35 Washington must consider the following repayment schedule:

36 (a) For less than one year of service in a public service career,  
37 the loan obligation is eighty-five percent of the conditional grant  
38 the student received, plus interest and an equalization fee;

1 (b) For less than two years of service in a public service  
2 career, the loan obligation is seventy percent of the conditional  
3 grant the student received, plus interest and an equalization fee;

4 (c) For less than three years of service in a public service  
5 career, the loan obligation is fifty-five percent of the conditional  
6 grant the student received, plus interest and an equalization fee;

7 (d) For less than four years of service in a public service  
8 career, the loan obligation is forty percent of the conditional grant  
9 the student received, plus interest and an equalization fee;

10 (e) For less than five years of service in a public service  
11 career, the loan obligation is twenty-five percent of the conditional  
12 grant the student received, plus interest and an equalization fee.

13 (7) The University of Washington is responsible for collection of  
14 repayments made under this section and shall exercise due diligence  
15 in such collection, maintaining all necessary records to ensure that  
16 maximum repayments are made. Collection and servicing of repayments  
17 under this section shall be pursued using the full extent of the law,  
18 including wage garnishment if necessary. The University of Washington  
19 is responsible for forgiving all or parts of such repayments under  
20 the criteria established in this section and shall maintain all  
21 necessary records of forgiven payments.

22 (8) The public service graduate degree conditional grant account  
23 is created in the custody of the state treasurer. An appropriation is  
24 not required for expenditures of funds from the account. The account  
25 is not subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW except  
26 for moneys used for program administration. The University of  
27 Washington shall deposit in the account all moneys received for the  
28 public service graduate degree conditional grant program. The account  
29 shall be self-sustaining and consist of funds appropriated by the  
30 legislature for the public service graduate degree conditional grant  
31 program, private contributions to the program, and receipts from  
32 participant repayments from the public service graduate degree  
33 conditional grant program. Expenditures from the account may be used  
34 solely for conditional grants to participants in the public service  
35 graduate degree conditional grant program established by this section  
36 and costs associated with program administration by the University of  
37 Washington. Disbursements from the account may be made only on the  
38 authorization of the University of Washington.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 8.**    The sum of two million dollars, or as much  
2    thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year  
3    ending June 30, 2019, from the general fund to the University of  
4    Washington for the purposes of section 7 of this act.

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