

ESSB 6141 - H COMM AMD

By Committee on College & Workforce Development

ADOPTED 03/04/2020

1 Strike everything after the enacting clause and insert the
2 following:

3 "NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes the increasing
4 importance of postsecondary education as a tool for economic
5 resilience and mobility, as well as the financial barriers many
6 students in our state face in pursuing postsecondary education. In
7 light of the 2019 expansion of the Washington college grant, it is
8 also important to share information about new financial aid
9 opportunities available to prospective postsecondary students. The
10 legislature also acknowledges Washington's low completion rate of the
11 free application for federal student aid in comparison with other
12 states, as well as other states' successes in increasing these rates
13 by expanding supports for students and their families. Research has
14 shown that increased completion of student aid applications in other
15 states has led to increases in high school graduation and college
16 matriculation, especially for students in underrepresented groups.
17 Given these facts, the legislature intends to undertake several
18 actions to improve financial aid awareness and to increase
19 coordination in this area among schools, districts, agencies, and
20 institutions of higher education.

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

23 (1) The council shall adopt a centralized online statewide
24 calculator tool for the purposes of estimating federal Pell grant and
25 Washington college grant awards for all public four-year institutions
26 of higher education in Washington state.

27 (2) The tool must provide an estimate of state and federal aid
28 based on student and family financial circumstances.

29 (3) The calculator tool must be published on a web site managed
30 by the council.

1 (4) The financial aid calculator must be for estimation purposes
2 only and is not a guarantee of state aid. Neither this section nor
3 the estimates provided by the financial aid calculator constitute an
4 entitlement on the part of the state, and no institution, agency, or
5 their agents or employees may be held liable for any estimates
6 created through its usage.

7 (5) The financial aid calculator must be designed for anonymous
8 use and may not be used to collect or share any data.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.77
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 (1) In collaboration with financial aid experts from public four-
12 year and two-year institutions of higher education, as well as
13 independent colleges in Washington state, the Washington student
14 achievement council shall develop clear, consistent definitions for
15 institutions of higher education to adopt regarding financial aid
16 package award letters.

17 (2) By July 1, 2021, all public four-year and two-year
18 institutions of higher education, as well as all independent colleges
19 in Washington state, must adopt uniform terminology and a
20 standardized template for financial aid award packages so that
21 students may easily compare them.

22 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.230
23 RCW to read as follows:

24 (1)(a) Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, all school
25 districts with a high school must provide a financial aid advising
26 day, as defined in section 5 of this act.

27 (b) Districts must provide both a financial aid advising day and
28 notification of financial aid opportunities at the beginning of each
29 school year to parents and guardians of any student entering the
30 twelfth grade. The notification must include information regarding:

31 (i) The eligibility requirements of the Washington college grant;
32 (ii) The requirements of the financial aid advising day;
33 (iii) The process for opting out of the financial aid advising
34 day; and

35 (iv) Any community-based resources available to assist parents
36 and guardians in understanding the requirements of and how to
37 complete the free application for federal student aid and the
38 Washington application for state financial aid.

1 (2) Districts may administer the financial aid advising day, as
2 defined in section 5 of this act, in accordance with information-
3 sharing requirements set in the high school and beyond plan in RCW
4 28A.230.090.

5 (3) The Washington state school directors' association, with
6 assistance from the office of the superintendent of public
7 instruction and the Washington student achievement council, shall
8 develop a model policy and procedure that school district board of
9 directors may adopt. The model policy and procedure must describe
10 minimum standards for a financial aid advising day as defined in
11 section 5 of this act.

12 (4) School districts are encouraged to engage in the Washington
13 student achievement council's financial aid advising training.

14 (5) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may
15 adopt rules for the implementation of this section.

16 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.300
17 RCW to read as follows:

18 (1)(a) Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, within existing
19 resources, and in collaboration with the Washington student
20 achievement council, the office of the superintendent of public
21 instruction shall coordinate a financial aid advising day with all
22 school districts with a high school.

23 (b) For the purposes of this section and section 4 of this act, a
24 "financial aid advising day" means a day or series of days between
25 September 1st and December 1st of each year that includes, but is not
26 limited to, dedicated time during regular school hours for staff to:

27 (i) Provide information to twelfth grade students on the free
28 application for federal student aid, the Washington application for
29 state financial aid, and the college board's CSS profile;

30 (ii) As appropriate and whenever possible, assist twelfth grade
31 students in completing the free application for federal student aid
32 and the Washington application for state financial aid; and

33 (iii) In conjunction with the Washington student achievement
34 council, distribute information on the Washington college grant and
35 demonstrate the use of the college financial aid calculator created
36 in section 2 of this act.

37 (c) Each school district may choose the date or series of dates
38 on which to hold a financial aid advising day.

1 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
2 coordinate with the Washington student achievement council whenever
3 possible to assist districts in facilitating opportunities outside of
4 regular school hours for parents to take part in seminars on
5 completing the free application for federal student aid and the
6 Washington application for state financial aid. Whenever possible,
7 districts shall provide spoken language interpreter services for
8 limited English-speaking families.

9 (3) Schools must allow students over the age of eighteen to opt
10 out and parents or guardians of students under the age of eighteen to
11 opt their student out of scheduled financial aid advising day
12 activities.

13 (4) A student may not be penalized for failing to complete
14 financial aid applications or for opting out of activities under
15 subsection (3) of this section.

16 (5) Educational staff, including instructional, administrative,
17 and counseling staff, may not be assessed or penalized on the basis
18 of students' completion of financial aid forms or students' decisions
19 to opt out under subsection (3) of this section.

20 (6) In the administration of the financial aid advising day,
21 personally identifiable student or family information must be
22 protected in accordance with state and federal privacy laws.

23 **Sec. 6.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 2019 c 252 s 103 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The state board of education shall establish high school
26 graduation requirements or equivalencies for students, except as
27 provided in RCW 28A.230.122 and 28A.655.250 and except those
28 equivalencies established by local high schools or school districts
29 under RCW 28A.230.097. The purpose of a high school diploma is to
30 declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary
31 education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with
32 the skills to be a lifelong learner.

33 (a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to
34 fulfill high school graduation requirements shall consider including
35 information on the culture, history, and government of the American
36 Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

37 (b) Except as provided otherwise in this subsection, the
38 certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW
39 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements

1 under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high
2 school but are not the only requirements for graduation. The
3 requirement to earn a certificate of academic achievement to qualify
4 for graduation from a public high school concludes with the
5 graduating class of 2019. The obligation of qualifying students to
6 earn a certificate of individual achievement as a prerequisite for
7 graduation from a public high school concludes with the graduating
8 class of 2021.

9 (c)(i) Each student must have a high school and beyond plan to
10 guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking
11 that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training
12 and career after high school.

13 (ii)(A) A high school and beyond plan must be initiated for each
14 student during the seventh or eighth grade. In preparation for
15 initiating that plan, each student must first be administered a
16 career interest and skills inventory.

17 (B) For students with an individualized education program, the
18 high school and beyond plan must be developed in alignment with their
19 individualized education program. The high school and beyond plan
20 must be developed in a similar manner and with similar school
21 personnel as for all other students.

22 (iii)(A) The high school and beyond plan must be updated to
23 reflect high school assessment results in RCW 28A.655.070(3)(b) and
24 to review transcripts, assess progress toward identified goals, and
25 revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs. The
26 plan must identify available interventions and academic support,
27 courses, or both, that are designed for students who are not on track
28 to graduate, to enable them to fulfill high school graduation
29 requirements. Each student's high school and beyond plan must be
30 updated to inform junior year course taking.

31 (B) For students with an individualized education program, the
32 high school and beyond plan must be updated in alignment with their
33 school to postschool transition plan. The high school and beyond plan
34 must be updated in a similar manner and with similar school personnel
35 as for all other students.

36 (iv) School districts are encouraged to involve parents and
37 guardians in the process of developing and updating the high school
38 and beyond plan, and the plan must be provided to the students'
39 parents or guardians in their native language if that language is one
40 of the two most frequently spoken non-English languages of students

1 in the district. Nothing in this subsection (1)(c)(iv) prevents
2 districts from providing high school and beyond plans to parents and
3 guardians in additional languages that are not required by this
4 subsection.

5 (v) All high school and beyond plans must, at a minimum, include
6 the following elements:

7 (A) Identification of career goals, aided by a skills and
8 interest assessment;

9 (B) Identification of educational goals;

10 (C) Identification of dual credit programs and the opportunities
11 they create for students, including eligibility for automatic
12 enrollment in advanced classes under RCW 28A.320.195, career and
13 technical education programs, running start programs, AP courses,
14 international baccalaureate programs, and college in the high school
15 programs;

16 (D) Information about the college bound scholarship program
17 established in chapter 28B.118 RCW;

18 (E) A four-year plan for course taking that:

19 (I) Includes information about options for satisfying state and
20 local graduation requirements;

21 (II) Satisfies state and local graduation requirements;

22 (III) Aligns with the student's secondary and postsecondary
23 goals, which can include education, training, and career;

24 (IV) Identifies course sequences to inform academic acceleration,
25 as described in RCW 28A.320.195 that include dual credit courses or
26 programs and are aligned with the student's goals; and

27 (V) Includes information about the college bound scholarship
28 program, the Washington college grant, and other scholarship
29 opportunities;

30 (F) Evidence that the student has received the following
31 information on federal and state financial aid programs that help pay
32 for the costs of a postsecondary program:

33 (I) Information about the documentation necessary for completing
34 the applications; application timeliness and submission deadlines;
35 the importance of submitting applications early; information specific
36 to students who are or have been in foster care; information specific
37 to students who are, or are at risk of being, homeless; information
38 specific to students whose family member or guardians will be
39 required to provide financial and tax information necessary to
40 complete applications; and

1 (II) Opportunities to participate in sessions that assist
2 students and, when necessary, their family members or guardians, fill
3 out financial aid applications; and

4 (G) By the end of the twelfth grade, a current resume or activity
5 log that provides a written compilation of the student's education,
6 any work experience, and any community service and how the school
7 district has recognized the community service pursuant to RCW
8 28A.320.193.

9 (d) Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's
10 high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan
11 shall remain at the local level. Effective with the graduating class
12 of 2015, the state board of education may not establish a requirement
13 for students to complete a culminating project for graduation. A
14 district may establish additional, local requirements for a high
15 school and beyond plan to serve the needs and interests of its
16 students and the purposes of this section.

17 (e) (i) The state board of education shall adopt rules to
18 implement the career and college ready graduation requirement
19 proposal adopted under board resolution on November 10, 2010, and
20 revised on January 9, 2014, to take effect beginning with the
21 graduating class of 2019 or as otherwise provided in this subsection
22 (1) (e). The rules must include authorization for a school district to
23 waive up to two credits for individual students based on a student's
24 circumstances, provided that none of the waived credits are
25 identified as mandatory core credits by the state board of education.
26 School districts must adhere to written policies authorizing the
27 waivers that must be adopted by each board of directors of a school
28 district that grants diplomas. The rules must also provide that the
29 content of the third credit of mathematics and the content of the
30 third credit of science may be chosen by the student based on the
31 student's interests and high school and beyond plan with agreement of
32 the student's parent or guardian or agreement of the school counselor
33 or principal.

34 (ii) School districts may apply to the state board of education
35 for a waiver to implement the career and college ready graduation
36 requirement proposal beginning with the graduating class of 2020 or
37 2021 instead of the graduating class of 2019. In the application, a
38 school district must describe why the waiver is being requested, the
39 specific impediments preventing timely implementation, and efforts
40 that will be taken to achieve implementation with the graduating

1 class proposed under the waiver. The state board of education shall
2 grant a waiver under this subsection (1)(e) to an applying school
3 district at the next subsequent meeting of the board after receiving
4 an application.

5 (iii) A school district must update the high school and beyond
6 plans for each student who has not earned a score of level 3 or level
7 4 on the middle school mathematics assessment identified in RCW
8 28A.655.070 by ninth grade, to ensure that the student takes a
9 mathematics course in both ninth and tenth grades. This course may
10 include career and technical education equivalencies in mathematics
11 adopted pursuant to RCW 28A.230.097.

12 (2)(a) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state
13 board of education to establish and enforce minimum high school
14 graduation requirements, the state board shall periodically
15 reevaluate the graduation requirements and shall report such findings
16 to the legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state
17 board.

18 (b) The state board shall reevaluate the graduation requirements
19 for students enrolled in vocationally intensive and rigorous career
20 and technical education programs, particularly those programs that
21 lead to a certificate or credential that is state or nationally
22 recognized. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students
23 enrolled in these programs have sufficient opportunity to earn a
24 certificate of academic achievement, complete the program and earn
25 the program's certificate or credential, and complete other state and
26 local graduation requirements.

27 (c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the
28 high school graduation requirements to the education committees of
29 the legislature for review. The legislature shall have the
30 opportunity to act during a regular legislative session before the
31 changes are adopted through administrative rule by the state board.
32 Changes that have a fiscal impact on school districts, as identified
33 by a fiscal analysis prepared by the office of the superintendent of
34 public instruction, shall take effect only if formally authorized and
35 funded by the legislature through the omnibus appropriations act or
36 other enacted legislation.

37 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages
38 other than English established by the state board of education or a
39 local school district, or both, for purposes of high school
40 graduation, students who receive instruction in American sign

1 language or one or more American Indian languages shall be considered
2 to have satisfied the state or local school district graduation
3 requirement for instruction in one or more languages other than
4 English.

5 (4) Unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's
6 family, a student who has completed high school courses before
7 attending high school shall be given high school credit which shall
8 be applied to fulfilling high school graduation requirements if:

9 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the
10 academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and
11 eighth grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by
12 completing the same course requirements and examinations as the high
13 school students enrolled in the class; or

14 (b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for
15 seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for
16 high school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a
17 course offered at a high school in the district as determined by the
18 school district board of directors.

19 (5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high
20 school courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this
21 section shall not be required to take an additional competency
22 examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive
23 credit.

24 (6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three
25 semester hours equals one high school credit.

26 **Sec. 7.** RCW 28A.230.215 and 2019 c 252 s 504 are each amended to
27 read as follows:

28 (1) The legislature finds that fully realizing the potential of
29 high school and beyond plans as meaningful tools for articulating and
30 revising pathways for graduation will require additional school
31 counselors and family coordinators. The legislature further finds
32 that the development and implementation of an online electronic
33 platform for high school and beyond plans will be an appropriate and
34 supportive action that will assist students, parents and guardians,
35 educators, and counselors as the legislature explores options for
36 funding additional school counselors.

37 (2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
38 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
39 instruction shall facilitate the creation of a list of available

1 electronic platforms for the high school and beyond plan. Platforms
2 eligible to be included on the list must meet the following
3 requirements:

4 (a) Enable students to create, personalize, and revise their high
5 school and beyond plan as required by RCW 28A.230.090;

6 (b) Grant parents or guardians, educators, and counselors
7 appropriate access to students' high school and beyond plans;

8 (c) Employ a sufficiently flexible technology that allows for
9 subsequent modifications necessitated by statutory changes,
10 administrative changes, or both, as well as enhancements to improve
11 the features and functionality of the platform;

12 (d) Include a sample financial aid letter and a link to the
13 financial aid calculator created in section 2 of this act, at such a
14 time as those materials are finalized;

15 (e) Comply with state and federal requirements for student
16 privacy;

17 ~~((e))~~ (f) Allow for the portability between platforms so that
18 students moving between school districts are able to easily transfer
19 their high school and beyond plans; and

20 ~~((f))~~ (g) To the extent possible, include platforms in use by
21 school districts during the 2018-19 school year.

22 (3) Beginning in the 2020-21 school year, each school district
23 must ensure that an electronic high school and beyond plan platform
24 is available to all students who are required to have a high school
25 and beyond plan.

26 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may
27 adopt and revise rules as necessary to implement this section.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If any part of this act is found to be in
29 conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to
30 the allocation of federal funds to the state, the conflicting part of
31 this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict and with
32 respect to the agencies directly affected, and this finding does not
33 affect the operation of the remainder of this act in its application
34 to the agencies concerned. Rules adopted under this act must meet
35 federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of
36 federal funds by the state."

37 Correct the title.

EFFECT: Requires the inclusion of information on the College Board's CSS Profile as part of the Financial Aid Advising Day.

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