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**College & Workforce Development  
Committee**

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**2SSB 5433**

**Brief Description:** Providing postsecondary education opportunities to enhance public safety.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Wilson, C., Nguyen, Das, Darneille, Dhingra, Hasegawa, Kuderer and Saldaña).

**Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill**

- Requires the Department of Corrections, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer to report on a plan to implement secure internet connections and expanded postsecondary educational opportunities for incarcerated adults.

**Hearing Date:** 3/20/19

**Staff:** Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

**Background:**

The Department of Corrections (DOC) contracts with eight community and technical colleges to offer basic education for adults and workforce education programs at each of the state's 12 correctional institutions. Basic education includes high school equivalency preparation, English as a second language, computer literacy, the High School 21+ program, and pre-college instruction. Workforce programs allow offenders to earn college certificates in subjects such as horticulture, carpentry, mechanics, construction, maintenance, and baking.

In 2017 the DOC was authorized to fund associate workforce degrees at state correctional institutions. Incarcerated adults who meet certain priority criteria may be selected to participate in the programs. Priority is given to incarcerated adults within five years of release, to those who do not already possess a postsecondary degree, and to those with an individual re-entry plan that includes participation in an associate workforce degree program offered at their correctional

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institution. Incarcerated adults who do not meet the priority criteria may still participate in the programs, but must pay the cost themselves. Incarcerated adults who are sentenced to life without the possibility of release or who are sentenced to death may not participate in state-funded associate workforce degree programs.

For the 2017-18 academic year, incarcerated adults participating in programs offered by the community and technical colleges earned:

- 90 high school diplomas through the High School 21+ program;
- 831 GED certificates;
- 1,933 vocational certificates; and
- 53 associate degrees in business, business management, automotive collision repair, HVAC, and welding.

### **Summary of Bill:**

The DOC, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Office of the Chief Information Officer must submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature by December 1, 2019, on the following:

- a plan for implementing secure internet connections for postsecondary education purposes;
- the barriers and costs associated with implementing secure internet connections;
- a review of the fiscal impacts, including any estimated capital and operating costs associated with expanding current educational opportunities and training to incarcerated adults through expanded partnerships with the community and technical colleges; and
- a plan for implementing expanded postsecondary degree opportunities, including the estimated time period necessary within the estimated costs associated with the fiscal impacts.

The DOC is prohibited from implementing or using a new secure internet connection for offender postsecondary education until the Legislature receives the report.

Intent language is modified to replace associate degrees with postsecondary education. The statute expires December 31, 2019.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.