| Washington State
House of Representatives
Office of Program Research | **BILL**
ANALYSIS |

College & Workforce Development Committee

2SSB 5800

Brief Description: Concerning homeless college students.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Randall, Zeiger, Nguyen, Wilson, C., Saldaña, Carlyle, Keiser, Sheldon, Das, Hasegawa and Kuderer).

Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Creates pilot programs at the community and technical colleges and the four-year higher education institutions to provide assistance to homeless students and students who were in foster care.

Hearing Date: 3/19/19

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (State Board) is the state agency charged with coordinating and advocating on behalf of the state's 34 community and technical colleges (CTCs). The CTCs are located in 30 college districts across the state. The CTCs have open door policies, and their purpose is to provide comprehensive education and training that meets the needs of the community, basic skills and literacy education, and apprenticeship opportunities.

The Student Achievement Council (Council) is the state agency tasked with providing strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment. The Council is responsible for authorizing degree-granting institutions, administering the state's financial aid programs, setting minimum college admission standards, and providing research and policy recommendations.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Homeless often refers to a condition where an individual lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) includes several questions to help postsecondary institutions determine if a student is homeless. The postsecondary institution then needs to verify a student's status, such as through documentation provided by a shelter or through a financial aid administrator.

Summary of Bill:

Subject to appropriation, the State Board and the Council must both establish pilot programs to provide assistance and accommodations to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in foster care when they graduated high school. The State Board's pilot program must include four college districts, with two on each side of the Cascade Mountains. The Council's pilot program must include two four-year higher education institutions, one on each side of the Cascade Mountains. The CTCs and institutions chosen to participate must provide accommodations to homeless students and students who were in foster care at high school graduation. The accommodations may include:
- access to laundry facilities, storage, locker rooms and showers, and technology;
- reduced-price meals or meal plans;
- access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and
- case management services.

The CTCs and institutions may also establish plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing.

The pilot programs must both report to the Legislature by December 1, 2023. The reports must include data on the number of students experiencing homelessness and those who were in the foster care system at high school graduation, the number of students assisted, and strategies and recommendations on how to better serve these students. The college districts and institutions not participating in the pilot programs are invited and encouraged to voluntarily submit similar data to include in the report. The pilot programs expire July 1, 2023.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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