

FINAL BILL REPORT

E2SSB 5194

C 272 L 21
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning equity and access in higher education.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Hasegawa, Das, Hunt, Keiser, Nguyen and Wilson, C.).

Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development
Senate Committee on Ways & Means
House Committee on College & Workforce Development
House Committee on Appropriations

Background: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) has adopted a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work plan which includes developing hiring resources, analyzing cultural climate resources, creating professional development opportunities, and identifying opportunities for the SBCTC to act as a leader on DEI activities.

Guided Pathways. The Guided Pathways program is a research-based approach that simplifies higher education choices for students. Courses are grouped together to form clear paths within chosen fields to get students through college and into careers. Guided Pathways provides students with targeted advising to help them stay on their chosen path and evaluates learning outcomes as students progress down a path. The SBCTC is implementing Guided Pathways at CTCs as a pilot. Six colleges were chosen for the pilot, and five additional colleges will be selected this year.

Counselors. Counselors in the CTC system are considered academic employees and faculty appointments for purposes of tenure and collective bargaining. There is no statutory definition of counselor for purposes of CTC employees, and there are no statutorily prescribed minimum requirements for a person to be employed as a counselor at a CTC.

1079 Standard. The Legislature passed HB 1079 in 2003, allowing eligible undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at state universities and colleges if they meet all of the

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following criteria:

- received a diploma from a high school or the equivalent in Washington State;
- lived in the state for at least three calendar years prior to receiving their diploma or equivalent; and
- continuously lived in the state since receiving their high school diploma.

Eligible students must provide, to the institution, an affidavit indicating they will file an application to become a permanent resident at the earliest opportunity and are willing to engage in other activities necessary to acquire citizenship including, but not limited to, citizenship or civics courses.

Summary: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan. Beginning in 2022, all CTCs must submit to the SBCTC strategic plans for achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion on their campuses. The plans must be publicly posted and define key terms including diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally appropriate. The process must include stakeholders from diverse groups. The SBCTC must develop a model faculty diversity program to aid in recruitment and retention of faculty from diverse backgrounds.

Guided Pathways. Subject to appropriations, at a minimum, Guided Pathways implementation must include:

- comprehensive mapping of educational pathways;
- dedicated advising and career counseling;
- data analytics to measure student learning and program outcomes; and
- student success support infrastructure with a focus on closing equity gaps among historically underserved populations.

Each college must define and conspicuously post definitions for key terms in guided pathways program documents and reports.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy must complete a study of guided pathways with a preliminary report due in 2023 and a final report due in 2029.

Tenure-Track Faculty. In the 2021-23 biennium the Legislature intends to convert 200 part-time faculty positions to full-time faculty positions. The SBCTC must collect data and assess the impact of these conversions on student outcomes. The report must be conspicuously posted and include definitions for key terms including diversity, equity, inclusion, and culturally competent.

Mental Health Counselor Grant Program and Minimum Standards. The SBCTC must establish a pilot program to increase student access to mental health counseling and services. The SBCTC must provide grants to CTCs, with at least half located outside the Puget Sound area, to implement one or more strategies to increase access to mental health counseling and services. Colleges selected for the pilot program must conspicuously post, and include in the report to the Legislature, definitions for key terms including diversity,

equity, inclusion, and culturally competent.

Within existing resources, the SBCTC must establish minimum faculty-counselor standards. These must include a graduate or professional degree in a specified field, completion of appropriate graduate coursework, and other standards determined by the SBCTC.

Undocumented Student Loan Program. Residency requirements are modified to require one year of Washington State residency.

Modifications to Residency Statute. The 1079 standard is modified to allow students to be resident students for the purposes of aid and tuition if they have lived in Washington for at least one year.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	30	19	
House	60	38	(House amended)
Senate	30	19	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 25, 2021