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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1835**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2022 Regular Session**

**By** House College & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Representatives Hansen, Leavitt, Santos, Simmons, Chopp, Slatter, Bergquist, Valdez, Pollet, and Ormsby)

READ FIRST TIME 01/26/22.

1 AN ACT Relating to outreach and completion initiatives to  
2 increase postsecondary enrollment; amending RCW 28B.92.200 and  
3 28B.120.040; adding a new section to chapter 28B.77 RCW; adding a new  
4 section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28B.92  
5 RCW; creating new sections; repealing RCW 28B.120.005, 28B.120.010,  
6 28B.120.020, 28B.120.025, 28B.120.030, and 28B.120.900; and providing  
7 an expiration date.

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

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that, in 2020,  
10 Washington ranked 49th nationally for completion of the free  
11 application for federal student aid among high school seniors. The  
12 free application for federal student aid is the form that prospective  
13 and current postsecondary education students use to receive federal  
14 and state financial aid, such as the federal Pell grant, the  
15 Washington college grant, the college bound scholarship, the  
16 opportunity scholarship, federal student loans, and many other  
17 financial resources for college. For students who cannot file a free  
18 application for federal student aid, the state has an alternative  
19 financial aid application called the Washington state application for  
20 financial aid. The free application for federal student aid is a  
21 strong indicator for college enrollment. Ninety-two percent of high

1 school seniors who completed the free application for federal student  
2 aid enrolled in a postsecondary institution by the November following  
3 graduation versus 51 percent of students who did not complete a free  
4 application for federal student aid. In addition, the legislature  
5 recognizes that the pandemic has exacerbated equity gaps in college  
6 access as colleges and universities are experiencing decreases in  
7 enrollments among low-income students, despite having one of the  
8 largest and most generous need-based financial aid programs in the  
9 country. The legislature recognizes that the Washington college grant  
10 program established in chapter 28B.92 RCW, which education trust  
11 called "the most equity-focused free college program in the country"  
12 is a critical tool to address these equity gaps and help students  
13 enter college and apprenticeships. Therefore, it is the legislature's  
14 intent to establish an outreach initiative for the Washington college  
15 grant and an outreach and completion initiative for the free  
16 application for federal student aid and Washington state application  
17 for financial aid to help students succeed.

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

20 Subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this specific  
21 purpose, the student achievement council shall conduct a statewide  
22 marketing campaign to increase awareness of the Washington college  
23 grant program established in chapter 28B.92 RCW. The student  
24 achievement council shall issue a request for proposal for hiring a  
25 marketing firm that will produce high quality advertisements to  
26 promote the state's largest financial aid program. Advertisements  
27 should be marketed towards potential postsecondary students and their  
28 parents with the goal of increasing awareness of the Washington  
29 college grant program to further the state's educational attainment  
30 goals. The advertisements may include television commercials,  
31 billboards, advertisements on public transit, paid internet search  
32 advertisements, and social media marketing.

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

35 Subject to availability of amounts appropriated for this specific  
36 purpose, the institutions of higher education shall develop and  
37 administer a free application for federal student aid and Washington

1 state application for financial aid outreach and completion  
2 initiative.

3 (1) The institutions of higher education shall employ outreach  
4 specialists to work directly with high schools. The outreach  
5 specialists shall make significant contact with high school students  
6 and their families for the purpose of increasing high school student  
7 free application for federal student aid and Washington state  
8 application for financial aid completion rates. It is the  
9 legislature's intent that the outreach specialists be employed at a  
10 ratio of one to 600 high school seniors, with 60 percent of the  
11 outreach specialists employed by community and technical colleges and  
12 40 percent employed by the public four-year institutions of higher  
13 education. The outreach specialists shall use the free application  
14 for federal student aid and Washington state application for  
15 financial aid data maintained by the student achievement council to  
16 conduct targeted outreach and free application for federal student  
17 aid and Washington state application for financial aid completion  
18 assistance to high school seniors. The outreach specialists shall  
19 also provide information on how to access private scholarships. The  
20 outreach specialists shall conduct other outreach as appropriate,  
21 including virtual or in-person presentations with students and  
22 families, announcements on school intercoms and social media  
23 channels, outreach to recent high school graduates as peer  
24 messengers, and events at school college or career fairs.

25 (2) The institutions of higher education shall report to the  
26 appropriate committees of the legislature in accordance with RCW  
27 43.01.036 by December 1, 2023, on the free application for federal  
28 student aid and Washington state application for financial aid  
29 outreach and completion initiative. The report must include details  
30 on how the institutions of higher education used the funding and how  
31 the initiatives worked to increase free application for federal  
32 student aid and Washington state application for financial aid  
33 completion rates. The report must also include before and after free  
34 application for federal student aid and Washington state application  
35 for financial aid completion data and specific details about the  
36 number of high school students assisted in completing the free  
37 application for federal student aid and Washington state application  
38 for financial aid.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 4.**    (1) Subject to availability of amounts  
2 appropriated for this specific purpose, the state library shall  
3 administer a grant pilot program and distribute grants to local  
4 public libraries to conduct outreach to their communities with the  
5 purpose of increasing free application for federal student aid and  
6 Washington state application for financial aid completion rates.

7        (2) The state library shall, as a condition of the grant pilot  
8 program, require local public libraries to partner with community-  
9 based organizations including, where appropriate, organizations with  
10 proven track records of working with historically underrepresented  
11 populations, to implement a community grant pilot program to increase  
12 free application for federal student aid and Washington state  
13 application for financial aid completion. The organization or  
14 organizations selected shall:

15        (a) Be embedded in their respective community and have a strong  
16 foundation of trust among members of the community; and

17        (b) Be committed to working directly with individual members of  
18 their community to assist with one-on-one free application for  
19 federal student aid and Washington state application for financial  
20 aid completion and to provide information on how to access private  
21 scholarships.

22        (3) The state library shall report back to the appropriate  
23 committees of the legislature in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 by  
24 December 1, 2023, on the progress of the library outreach pilot  
25 project to boost free application for federal student aid and  
26 Washington state application for financial aid completion rates. The  
27 report must include the specific number of students that were  
28 assisted through the grant pilot program.

29        (4) This section expires July 1, 2024.

30        **Sec. 5.**    RCW 28B.92.200 and 2019 c 406 s 19 are each amended to  
31 read as follows:

32        (1) The Washington college grant program is created to provide a  
33 statewide free college program for eligible participants and greater  
34 access to postsecondary education for Washington residents. The  
35 Washington college grant program is intended to increase the number  
36 of high school graduates and adults that can attain a postsecondary  
37 credential and provide them with the qualifications needed to compete  
38 for job opportunities in Washington.

1 (2) The office shall implement and administer the Washington  
2 college grant program and is authorized to establish rules necessary  
3 for implementation of the program.

4 (3) The legislature shall appropriate funding for the Washington  
5 college grant program. Allocations must be made on the basis of  
6 estimated eligible participants enrolled in eligible institutions of  
7 higher education or apprenticeship programs. All eligible students  
8 are entitled to a Washington college grant beginning in academic year  
9 2020-21.

10 (4) The office shall award Washington college grants to all  
11 eligible students beginning in academic year 2020-21.

12 (5) To be eligible for the Washington college grant, students  
13 must meet the following requirements:

14 (a) (i) Demonstrate financial need under RCW 28B.92.205;

15 (ii) Receive one of the following types of public assistance:

16 (A) Temporary assistance for needy families under chapter 74.08  
17 RCW;

18 (B) Aged, blind, or disabled assistance benefits under chapter  
19 74.62 RCW; or

20 (C) Refugee cash assistance; or

21 (iii) Be a Washington high school student in the 10th, 11th, or  
22 12th grade whose parent or legal guardian is receiving one of the  
23 types of public assistance listed in (a)(ii) of this subsection and  
24 have received a certificate confirming eligibility from the office in  
25 accordance with section 6 of this act;

26 (b) (i) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three  
27 quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at an institution  
28 of higher education in Washington as defined in RCW 28B.92.030; or

29 (ii) Be enrolled in a registered apprenticeship program approved  
30 under chapter 49.04 RCW;

31 (c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a)  
32 through (e);

33 (d) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by  
34 the office; and

35 (e) Must not have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher from a  
36 postsecondary institution.

37 (6) Washington college grant eligibility may not extend beyond  
38 five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the published length  
39 of the program in which the student is enrolled or the credit or  
40 clock-hour equivalent.

1 (7) Institutional aid administrators shall determine whether a  
2 student eligible for the Washington college grant in a given academic  
3 year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family  
4 income increases by no more than three percent.

5 (8) Qualifications for receipt and renewal include maintaining  
6 satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an eligible  
7 program as determined by the office and established in rule.

8 (9) Should a recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any  
9 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the grant  
10 shall be returned to the state educational grant fund by the  
11 institution of higher education according to the institution of  
12 higher education's policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in  
13 RCW 28B.92.070.

14 (10) An eligible student enrolled on a part-time basis shall  
15 receive a prorated portion of the Washington college grant for any  
16 academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a part-time basis.

17 (11) The Washington college grant is intended to be used to meet  
18 the costs of postsecondary education for students with financial  
19 need. The student shall be awarded all need-based financial aid for  
20 which the student qualifies as determined by the institution.

21 (12) Students and participating institutions of higher education  
22 shall comply with all the rules adopted by the council for the  
23 administration of this chapter.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.92  
25 RCW to read as follows:

26 (1) The office shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with the  
27 department of social and health services to facilitate the sharing of  
28 individual-level data. The department of social and health services  
29 shall send the office a list of all individuals receiving benefits  
30 under the public assistance programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5)  
31 on at least an annual basis. The office shall use the list to confirm  
32 students' eligibility for the Washington college grant program,  
33 without requiring the student to fill out a separate financial aid  
34 form.

35 (2) For high school students in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades whose  
36 families are receiving benefits under one of the public assistance  
37 programs listed under RCW 28B.92.200(5), the office shall issue a  
38 certificate to the student that validates the student's financial  
39 need eligibility for the Washington college grant program. The

1 certificate is good for one year after high school graduation and may  
2 be used upon enrollment in an eligible institution of higher  
3 education, provided the student meets the other Washington college  
4 grant eligibility requirements. The office shall track and maintain  
5 records of students who were issued certificates under this section  
6 in order to confirm a student's financial need eligibility with an  
7 institution of higher education. A student does not need to produce  
8 the certificate to receive the Washington college grant.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.92  
10 RCW to read as follows:

11 Institutions of higher education authorized to participate in the  
12 Washington college grant program shall enter into data-sharing  
13 agreements with the office to facilitate the sharing of contact  
14 information of individuals who qualify for the Washington college  
15 grant through a public assistance program. The institutions of higher  
16 education shall use this information to conduct outreach directly to  
17 Washington college grant eligible individuals, such as through  
18 mailings that promote attending their specific institution for free  
19 with the Washington college grant.

20 **Sec. 8.** RCW 28B.120.040 and 2012 c 229 s 575 are each amended to  
21 read as follows:

22 The (~~student achievement council fund for innovation and~~  
23 ~~quality~~) Washington career and college pathways innovation challenge  
24 program account is hereby established in the custody of the state  
25 treasurer. The student achievement council shall deposit in the fund  
26 all moneys received (~~under RCW 28B.120.030~~) for the Washington  
27 career and college pathways innovation challenge program. Moneys in  
28 the fund may be spent only for the purposes of (~~RCW 28B.120.010 and~~  
29 ~~28B.120.020~~) awarding grants under the Washington career and college  
30 pathways innovation challenge program. Disbursements from the fund  
31 shall be on the authorization of the student achievement council. The  
32 fund is subject to the allotment procedure provided under chapter  
33 43.88 RCW, but no appropriation is required for disbursements.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** The following acts or parts of acts are  
35 each repealed:

36 (1) RCW 28B.120.005 (Findings) and 2010 c 245 s 6, 1999 c 169 s  
37 2, & 1991 c 98 s 1;

1           (2) RCW 28B.120.010 (Washington fund for innovation and quality  
2 in higher education program—Incentive grants) and 2012 c 229 s 571,  
3 2010 c 245 s 7, 1999 c 169 s 5, 1996 c 41 s 1, & 1991 c 98 s 2;

4           (3) RCW 28B.120.020 (Program administration—Powers and duties of  
5 student achievement council) and 2012 c 229 s 572, 2011 1st sp.s. c  
6 11 s 235, 2010 c 245 s 8, 1999 c 169 s 3, 1996 c 41 s 2, & 1991 c 98  
7 s 3;

8           (4) RCW 28B.120.025 (Program administration—Powers and duties of  
9 state board for community and technical colleges) and 2012 c 229 s  
10 573 & 1999 c 169 s 4;

11           (5) RCW 28B.120.030 (Receipt of gifts, grants, and endowments)  
12 and 2012 c 229 s 574, 1999 c 169 s 6, & 1991 c 98 s 4; and

13           (6) RCW 28B.120.900 (Intent—1999 c 169) and 1999 c 169 s 1.

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