

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5593

As of February 6, 2023

Title: An act relating to improving equity in the transfer of student data between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Improving equity in the transfer of student data between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: Senators Liias, Holy, Mullet, Lovick and Wilson, C..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/06/23.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires public four-year universities to enter into data-sharing agreements with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to facilitate the transfer of high school student directory information for informing high school students of postsecondary educational opportunities in the state.
- Requires school districts with a high school to annually transmit directory information to OSPI by November 1st.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that governs the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the United States Department of Education.

The law generally gives parents and guardians the right to inspect and review the student's

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education records and requires schools to obtain written permission from parents before disclosing any information from a student's educational record. However, schools may disclose certain directory information without consent. Under federal law and regulations, directory information includes, among other items, the student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, and electronic mail address.

Federal regulations under FERPA require that any educational agency or institution disclosing directory information must give public notice to parents or guardians about the following:

- the type of information it has designated as directory information;
- that a parent has a right to refuse to let the agency or institution designate any or all of those types as directory information; and
- the period of time in which the parent has to notify that they do not wish that information to be designated as directory.

The rights of parents and guardians under FERPA transfer to the student upon the student becoming 18 years of age. The board of directors of school districts are required under state law to establish a procedure for granting release requests by a parent or guardian for access to education records of their child and prohibiting the release of information without written consent, including what information is being requested, who is requesting the information and why, and what will be done with the information.

Summary of Bill: Public four-year universities in Washington must enter into data-sharing agreements with OSPI to facilitate the transfer of high school student directory information for informing Washington high school students of postsecondary educational opportunities available in the state.

School districts that operate a high school must annually transmit directory information of all enrolled high school students to OSPI by November 1st. OSPI must hold this information and make the information available to the state's public four-year universities.

When transmitting student information, school districts must comply with consent procedures under state and federal law, as well as all applicable rules and regulations.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This bill is a way to improve college attendance by improving systems behind-the-scenes. Currently, universities have to pay

out-of-state third-party vendors to obtain student data. This bill will improve equity by informing students about postsecondary opportunities who may otherwise not receive this information. The bill will save institutions money as they will not have to pay third-parties for data from students in our state. Institutions are only able to contact less than half of graduating students, primarily only those who take pre-college exams. This bill would help institutions better serve all Washingtonians. The bill would fundamentally change the trajectory of Washington students. The current system of information sharing benefits primarily white and affluent students. One centralized clearinghouse, when combined with our guaranteed admission program, will drastically improve our current system. Washington has the best financial aid programs in the country, but many students have no awareness of these programs.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Bill Lyne, United Faculty of Washington State; Nora Selander, Western Washington University; David Buri, Eastern Washington University; Jacob Vigdor, University of Washington Faculty; Kristin Murphy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI); Jeff Charbonneau, Zillah High School / Zillah School District; Samuel Ligon, Eastern Washington University Faculty; Christine McMullin, SBCTC; Jenee Myers Twitchell, Washington STEM.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.