

---

**SENATE BILL 5513**

---

**State of Washington**

**68th Legislature**

**2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Lias, Randall, Boehnke, Hasegawa, Hunt, Lovelett, Nguyen, Nobles, Saldaña, Valdez, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/23/23. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

1 AN ACT Relating to mental health counseling at community and  
2 technical colleges; amending RCW 28B.50.930; adding a new section to  
3 chapter 28B.50 RCW; and providing expiration dates.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.50.930 and 2021 c 272 s 6 are each amended to  
6 read as follows:

7 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
8 specific purpose, the college board shall administer a pilot program  
9 to increase student access to mental health counseling and services.

10 (2) The college board(~~(, in collaboration with the selection~~  
11 ~~committee,)) shall select community or technical colleges to~~  
12 participate in the pilot program. (~~(At least half of the~~  
13 ~~participating colleges must be located outside of the Puget Sound~~  
14 ~~area. For purposes of this section, "Puget Sound area" means~~  
15 ~~Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Thurston counties.))~~ Each participating  
16 college must receive a grant to implement one or more strategies to  
17 increase student access to mental health counseling and services,  
18 including substance use disorder counseling and services.

19 (3) (~~(a) A selection committee consisting of the following shall~~  
20 ~~assist with the application selection process:~~

21 ~~(i) One community or technical college president;~~

1       ~~(ii) One community or technical college vice president for~~  
2 ~~student services or student instruction;~~

3       ~~(iii) Two faculty counselors employed at a community or technical~~  
4 ~~college; and~~

5       ~~(iv) One community or technical college student.~~

6       ~~(b) The selection committee may consult with representatives of~~  
7 ~~an entity within a college or university that has expertise in~~  
8 ~~suicide prevention and the department of health in developing~~  
9 ~~selection criteria.~~

10       (4)) Community and technical colleges wishing to participate in  
11 the pilot program shall apply to the college board. Applicants must  
12 identify opportunities for expanding on-campus mental health  
13 counseling and services. Applicants must also show a commitment to  
14 further develop partnerships by engaging external community  
15 providers, including those who provide crisis services and substance  
16 use disorder treatment and counseling. Applications that demonstrate  
17 plans to include one or more of the following strategies recommended  
18 by the community and technical college counselors task force must be  
19 prioritized:

20       (a) Improve equity, diversity, and inclusion of all races in  
21 counseling services, such as by diversifying the counselor workforce  
22 by adopting equity-centered recruiting, training, and retention  
23 practices or by providing equity training and awareness for all  
24 counselors;

25       (b) Meet mental health needs of students through an all-campus  
26 effort;

27       (c) Engage students to help increase mental health and counseling  
28 awareness and promote help-seeking behavior through student groups  
29 and other methods;

30       (d) Increase the visibility of counseling services on campus;

31       (e) Increase or expand external partnerships with community  
32 service providers;

33       (f) Adopt the use of telebehavioral health, especially in  
34 underresourced communities;

35       (g) Develop an assessment of counseling services to inform  
36 improvements and ensure counseling services are meeting student  
37 needs; or

38       (h) Implement counseling approaches grounded in theory that have  
39 evidence of being effective.

1        ~~((5))~~ (4) Colleges selected to participate in the pilot program  
2 that use grant funding to hire additional mental health counselors  
3 must hire counselors who have specific graduate-level training for  
4 meeting the mental and behavioral health needs of students.

5        ~~((6))~~ (5) Colleges selected to participate in the pilot program  
6 shall submit a joint report to the appropriate committees of the  
7 legislature and in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 by November 1, 2023.  
8 The report must include:

9        (a) Information on which colleges were selected for the pilot  
10 program, how much grant funding was received per college, and what  
11 strategies each implemented to increase student access to mental  
12 health counseling and services;

13        (b) Demographic data of students accessing mental health  
14 counseling and services, including those students who are considered  
15 underrepresented or traditionally have limited access to mental  
16 health counseling and services;

17        (c) Whether the mental health counseling and services provided  
18 are meeting the demand of students in terms of type and availability,  
19 and whether the various types of mental health counseling and  
20 services are being provided by community providers versus on-campus  
21 services;

22        (d) Information and data on the effectiveness, including cost-  
23 effectiveness, of each strategy used to increase student access to  
24 mental health counseling and services, including substance use  
25 disorder counseling and services, such as the number of additional  
26 students served, reduced wait times for counseling appointments, or  
27 other data that reflects expanded access; and

28        (e) Lessons learned and recommendations for improving student  
29 access to mental health counseling and services at community and  
30 technical colleges and to community providers, including whether  
31 there were any strategies implemented that proved more effective than  
32 others in increasing access.

33        ~~((7))~~ (6) Colleges selected for the pilot program shall  
34 conspicuously post on their websites and include in the report to the  
35 legislature the definitions for key terms including: Diversity,  
36 equity, inclusion, culturally competent, culturally appropriate,  
37 historically marginalized communities, communities of color, low-  
38 income communities, and community organizations.

39        ~~((8))~~ (7) The pilot program expires July 1, ~~((2025))~~ 2026.

40        ~~((9))~~ (8) This section expires January 1, ~~((2026))~~ 2027.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 28B.50  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1)    Subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this  
4    purpose, the college board shall contract with a telehealth provider  
5    to address mental and behavioral health care for colleges not  
6    selected to participate in the mental health and counseling services  
7    pilot program under RCW 28B.50.930. Such telehealth services must not  
8    supplant existing mental and behavioral health services offered on  
9    the college campus. The college board must provide an evaluation of  
10   the impacts of telehealth care on students' academic and health  
11   outcomes and shall report the outcomes of the evaluation to the  
12   governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature by  
13   December 15, 2025.

14        (2)    This section expires January 1, 2028.

--- END ---