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**SENATE BILL 5308**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Hansen, Hasegawa, Krishnadasan, Liias, Nobles, Slatter, and Valdez

AN ACT Relating to making higher education more accessible by establishing the Washington guaranteed admissions program and requiring student notifications; adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; adding new sections to chapter 28A.150 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that engaging with high school students to prepare them for higher education and familiarize them with college admissions through guaranteed admissions increases equity, access, and credential completion in the state. The legislature intends to establish the Washington guaranteed admissions program as an appropriate and necessary step to accomplish these goals.

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

(1) The Washington guaranteed admissions program is established.

(2)(a) The regional universities, the state college, at least one campus of each state university, and tribal institutions of higher education operated by an Indian tribe as defined in RCW 43.376.010 shall participate in the Washington guaranteed admissions program beginning in the 2026-27 academic year.

(b) Institutions in (a) of this subsection may opt out of the Washington guaranteed admissions program by reporting to the legislature, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, the following:

(i) The reason for opting out; and

(ii) A detailed overview of other initiatives for improving admissions and expanding access to the institution for resident students.

(3) Beginning with the 2026-27 academic year, participating institutions shall simplify and streamline the general admissions application form requiring only necessary information for students.

(4) Beginning with the 2026-27 academic year, an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education shall consult with the student achievement council and the state board for community and technical colleges in determining eligibility criteria for the Washington guaranteed admissions program and annually reviewing the eligibility criteria.

(5) Beginning with the 2026-27 academic year, the Washington school information processing cooperative shall collect and transmit the data of students in grades 11 and 12 who meet the criteria determined in subsection (4) of this section to an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, which shall hold and make the information available to participating institutions for the purpose of guaranteeing admission to qualified applicants in accordance with this section.

(6) By December 10, 2027, and each year thereafter until December 31, 2032, an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education shall submit a report on the Washington guaranteed admissions program to the appropriate committees of the legislature in accordance with RCW 43.01.036. The report must include the following information from the prior academic year:

(a) Eligibility criteria and changes made to the Washington guaranteed admissions program;

(b) The number of students offered admission by each participating institution disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, Title I status of the high school attended, and economic status;

(c) The postsecondary enrollment rates of students offered guaranteed admissions by each participating institution disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, Title I status of the high school attended, and economic status;

(d) The postsecondary application and enrollment rates of students who are offered guaranteed admissions within 0.2 grade point average of the eligibility cutoff disaggregated by institution, race, ethnicity, gender, Title I status of the high school attended, and economic status; and

(e) The postsecondary application and enrollment rates of students who are not offered guaranteed admissions because their grade point average is below the eligibility cutoff by 0.2 grade point average or less, disaggregated by institution, race, ethnicity, gender, Title I status of the high school attended, and economic status.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.150 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By January 1, 2026, each school district, charter school, state-tribal education compact school, and institutional education provider with students in grade 11 or 12 shall enter into a data-sharing agreement with each participating institution in the Washington guaranteed admissions program established in section 2 of this act or the Washington school information processing cooperative to facilitate the transfer of data of students in grades 11 and 12 who meet the criteria determined pursuant to section 2(4) of this act. Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, school districts, charter schools, state-tribal education compact schools, and institutional education providers shall work with the Washington school information processing cooperative and participating institutions through an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education to facilitate the transfer of data required under this subsection.

(2) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Charter school" means a school established under chapter 28A.710 RCW.

(b) "Institutional education provider" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.190.005.

(c) "Participating institutions" are those that have not opted out of the program and includes the regional universities, the state college, at least one campus of each state university, and tribal institutions of higher education operated by an Indian tribe as defined in RCW 43.376.010.

(d) "State-tribal education compact school" means a school subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.150 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The student achievement council shall collaborate with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, the state board for community and technical colleges, educational service districts, the Washington school information processing cooperative, and the Washington school counselor association to create a notice providing information about the following programs or initiatives, including definitions and eligibility criteria:

(a) The Washington guaranteed admissions program established in section 2 of this act;

(b) The Washington college grant program created in RCW 28B.92.200;

(c) Dual credit programs as defined in RCW 28A.600.280;

(d) Career and technical education programs;

(e) Associate degrees and certificates;

(f) The free application for federal student aid; and

(g) The Washington application for state financial aid.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall work with the student achievement council to disseminate the notice created in subsection (1) of this section to each school district, charter school, state-tribal education compact school, and institutional education provider with students in grades nine through 12.

(3)(a) Beginning in the 2025-26 school year, each school district, charter school, state-tribal education compact school, and institutional education provider with students in grades nine through 12 shall:

(i) Disseminate the notice created in subsection (1) of this section to students in grades nine through 12 and their parents or guardians at the beginning of the school year, but no later than November of each school year. The notice may be disseminated electronically; and

(ii) Designate a staff member or create a virtual resource for students to learn more about the information contained in the notice created in subsection (1) of this section.

(b) Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, each school district, charter school, state-tribal education compact school, and institutional education provider with students in grade 11 or 12 shall:

(i) Collaborate with the Washington school information processing cooperative and participating public four-year institutions of higher education through an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education to create a notification about the Washington guaranteed admissions program established in section 2 of this act and general admissions. The notification must provide a parent or guardian of a student in grades nine through 12 with an opportunity to opt the student out of the Washington guaranteed admissions program; and

(ii) Disseminate the notice created in (b)(i) of this subsection to students in grades 11 and 12 and their parents or guardians.

(4) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Charter school" means a school established under chapter 28A.710 RCW.

(b) "Institutional education provider" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.190.005.

(c) "State-tribal education compact school" means a school subject to chapter 28A.715 RCW.

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