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**SENATE BILL 5663**

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

**By** Senators Slatter, Nobles, Frame, Lovick, and Valdez

AN ACT Relating to establishing a virtual campus for all Washingtonians; amending RCW 28B.50.090; and adding new sections to chapter 28B.50 RCW.

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

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

(1) Community and technical colleges may distribute information on their respective colleges outside of their district when it pertains to entirely online course offerings. Information provided by community and technical colleges may include unsolicited course and enrollment information. In providing this information, community and technical colleges may use, but are not limited to: Digital advertising, email, direct mail, newspaper advertisements, newspaper inserts, and other methods of mass distribution to those outside of a college district.

(2) Community and technical colleges may prioritize and make known to the citizens of its district courses and programs offered exclusively by neighboring districts.

(3) Community and technical colleges may not compete with each other or with other institutions of higher education for enrollment.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.50.090 and 2013 c 57 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

The college board shall have general supervision and control over the state system of community and technical colleges. In addition to the other powers and duties imposed upon the college board by this chapter, the college board shall be charged with the following powers, duties, and responsibilities:

(1) Review the budgets prepared by the boards of trustees, prepare a single budget for the support of the state system of community and technical colleges and adult education, and submit this budget to the governor as provided in RCW 43.88.090;

(2) Establish guidelines for the disbursement of funds; and receive and disburse such funds for adult education and maintenance and operation and capital support of the college districts in conformance with the state and district budgets, and in conformance with chapter 43.88 RCW;

(3) Ensure, through the full use of its authority:

(a) That each college district, in coordination with colleges, within a regional area, shall offer thoroughly comprehensive educational, training, and service programs to meet the needs of both the communities and students served by combining high standards of excellence in academic transfer courses; realistic and practical courses in occupational education, both graded and ungraded; and community services of an educational, cultural, and recreational nature; and adult education, including basic skills and general, family, and workforce literacy programs and services;

(b) That each college district shall maintain an open-door policy, to the end that no student will be denied admission because of the location of the student's residence or because of the student's educational background or ability; that, insofar as is practical in the judgment of the college board, curriculum offerings will be provided to meet the educational and training needs of the community generally and the students thereof; and that all students, regardless of their differing courses of study, will be considered, known and recognized equally as members of the student body: PROVIDED, That the administrative officers of a community or technical college may deny admission to a prospective student or attendance to an enrolled student if, in their judgment, the student would not be competent to profit from the curriculum offerings of the college, or would, by his or her presence or conduct, create a disruptive atmosphere within the college not consistent with the purposes of the institution. This subsection (3)(b) shall not apply to competency, conduct, or presence associated with a disability in a person twenty-one years of age or younger attending a technical college;

(4) Prepare a comprehensive master plan for the development of community and technical college education and training in the state; and assist the office of financial management in the preparation of enrollment projections to support plans for providing adequate college facilities in all areas of the state. The master plan shall include implementation of the vision, goals, priorities, and strategies in the statewide strategic master plan for higher education under RCW 28B.76.200 based on the community and technical college system's role and mission. The master plan shall also contain measurable performance indicators and benchmarks for gauging progress toward achieving the goals and priorities;

(5) Define and administer criteria and guidelines for the establishment of new community and technical colleges or campuses within the existing districts;

(6) Establish criteria and procedures for modifying district boundary lines and consolidating district structures to form multiple campus districts consistent with the purposes set forth in RCW 28B.50.020 as now or hereafter amended and in accordance therewith make such changes as it deems advisable;

(7) Establish minimum standards to govern the operation of the community and technical colleges with respect to:

(a) Qualifications and credentials of instructional and key administrative personnel, except as otherwise provided in the state plan for vocational education;

(b) Internal budgeting, accounting, auditing, and financial procedures as necessary to supplement the general requirements prescribed pursuant to chapter 43.88 RCW;

(c) The content of the curriculums and other educational and training programs, and the requirement for degrees and certificates awarded by the colleges;

(d) Standard admission policies;

(e) Eligibility of courses to receive state fund support; and

(f) Common student identifiers such that once a student has enrolled at any community or technical college he or she retains the same student identification upon transfer to any college district;

(8) Encourage colleges to use multiple measures to determine whether a student must enroll in a precollege course including, but not limited to, placement tests, the SAT, high school transcripts, college transcripts, or initial class performance, and require colleges to post all the available options for course placement on their website and in their admissions materials;

(9) Establish and administer criteria and procedures for all capital construction including the establishment, installation, and expansion of facilities within the various college districts;

(10) Encourage innovation in the development of new educational and training programs and instructional methods; coordinate research efforts to this end; and disseminate the findings thereof;

(11) Exercise any other powers, duties and responsibilities necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter;

(12) Authorize the various community and technical colleges to offer programs and courses in other districts when it determines that such action is consistent with the purposes set forth in RCW 28B.50.020 as now or hereafter amended;

(13) Establish and maintain a website for students to easily search entirely online course offerings offered by all the community and technical colleges by the start of academic year 2026-27, with the intention of using this as a foundation for a virtual campus for all Washingtonians. The virtual campus must allow for cross enrollment by students, in accordance with the plan for a virtual campus under section 3 of this act; and

(14) Notwithstanding any other law or statute regarding the sale of state property, sell or exchange and convey any or all interest in any community and technical college real and personal property, except such property as is received by a college district in accordance with RCW 28B.50.140(8), when it determines that such property is surplus or that such a sale or exchange is in the best interests of the community and technical college system;

((~~(14)~~)) (15) In order that the treasurer for the state board for community and technical colleges appointed in accordance with RCW 28B.50.085 may make vendor payments, the state treasurer will honor warrants drawn by the state board providing for an initial advance on July 1, 1982, of the current biennium and on July 1st of each succeeding biennium from the state general fund in an amount equal to twenty-four percent of the average monthly allotment for such budgeted biennium expenditures for the state board for community and technical colleges as certified by the office of financial management; and at the conclusion of such initial month and for each succeeding month of any biennium, the state treasurer will reimburse expenditures incurred and reported monthly by the state board treasurer in accordance with chapter 43.88 RCW: PROVIDED, That the reimbursement to the state board for actual expenditures incurred in the final month of each biennium shall be less the initial advance made in such biennium;

((~~(15)~~)) (16) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection ((~~(13)~~)) (14) of this section, may receive such gifts, grants, conveyances, devises, and bequests of real or personal property from private sources as may be made from time to time, in trust or otherwise, whenever the terms and conditions thereof will aid in carrying out the community and technical college programs and may sell, lease or exchange, invest or expend the same or the proceeds, rents, profits and income thereof according to the terms and conditions thereof; and adopt regulations to govern the receipt and expenditure of the proceeds, rents, profits and income thereof; and

((~~(16)~~)) (17) The college board shall have the power of eminent domain.

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

(1) The college board, in collaboration with the Washington student achievement council and an association representing faculty at the community and technical colleges, shall develop a plan for a virtual campus. The plan must:

(a) Review and develop policies that ensure students have:

(i) Access to view all courses provided entirely online by each respective community and technical college;

(ii) The option to simultaneously enroll in courses at the student's home college and courses provided entirely online by another college without formal admission, and without payment of additional fees or tuition; and

(iii) The ability to electronically transfer all relevant enrollment data from another college to the student's home college;

(b) Provide a timeline with explicit dates for when agreements among participating institutions need to be in place to allow for cross enrollment;

(c) Ensure that courses available on the virtual campus utilize technology and materials that are accessible to students;

(d) Lay out a fair and reasonable method for calculating the head count or full-time equivalent of students enrolled in entirely online classes through the virtual campus;

(e) Establish policies that guarantee compliance with state law regarding the cost of tuition for nonresident and international students; and

(f) Establish that a student is only qualified to participate in the program if they are enrolled at a home college.

(2) By December 1, 2026, the college board shall report to the appropriate committees of the legislature, in accordance with RCW 43.01.036, on its plan, including recommendations for legislation, for establishing a virtual campus by academic year 2028-29.

(3) By academic year 2026-27, the college board shall provide a publicly available website that, at minimum, provides a way for a student to find and enroll in entirely online courses offered by community and technical colleges.

(4) For the purpose of this section, "home college" means the community or technical college at which a student is matriculated.

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