
SENATE BILL 5663

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

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

Read first time 02/05/25. Referred to Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.50.090 and 2013 c 57 s 1 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

27 (b) That each college district shall maintain an open-door
28 policy, to the end that no student will be denied admission because
29 of the location of the student's residence or because of the
30 student's educational background or ability; that, insofar as is
31 practical in the judgment of the college board, curriculum offerings
32 will be provided to meet the educational and training needs of the
33 community generally and the students thereof; and that all students,
34 regardless of their differing courses of study, will be considered,
35 known and recognized equally as members of the student body:
36 PROVIDED, That the administrative officers of a community or
37 technical college may deny admission to a prospective student or
38 attendance to an enrolled student if, in their judgment, the student
39 would not be competent to profit from the curriculum offerings of the
40 college, or would, by his or her presence or conduct, create a

1 disruptive atmosphere within the college not consistent with the
2 purposes of the institution. This subsection (3)(b) shall not apply
3 to competency, conduct, or presence associated with a disability in a
4 person twenty-one years of age or younger attending a technical
5 college;

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

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

20 (6) Establish criteria and procedures for modifying district
21 boundary lines and consolidating district structures to form multiple
22 campus districts consistent with the purposes set forth in RCW
23 28B.50.020 as now or hereafter amended and in accordance therewith
24 make such changes as it deems advisable;

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

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

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

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

36 (d) Standard admission policies;

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

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

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

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

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

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

15 (12) Authorize the various community and technical colleges to
16 offer programs and courses in other districts when it determines that
17 such action is consistent with the purposes set forth in RCW
18 28B.50.020 as now or hereafter amended;

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

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

33 ~~((14))~~ (15) In order that the treasurer for the state board for
34 community and technical colleges appointed in accordance with RCW
35 28B.50.085 may make vendor payments, the state treasurer will honor
36 warrants drawn by the state board providing for an initial advance on
37 July 1, 1982, of the current biennium and on July 1st of each
38 succeeding biennium from the state general fund in an amount equal to
39 twenty-four percent of the average monthly allotment for such
40 budgeted biennium expenditures for the state board for community and

1 technical colleges as certified by the office of financial
2 management; and at the conclusion of such initial month and for each
3 succeeding month of any biennium, the state treasurer will reimburse
4 expenditures incurred and reported monthly by the state board
5 treasurer in accordance with chapter 43.88 RCW: PROVIDED, That the
6 reimbursement to the state board for actual expenditures incurred in
7 the final month of each biennium shall be less the initial advance
8 made in such biennium;

9 ~~((15))~~ (16) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection
10 ~~((13))~~ (14) of this section, may receive such gifts, grants,
11 conveyances, devises, and bequests of real or personal property from
12 private sources as may be made from time to time, in trust or
13 otherwise, whenever the terms and conditions thereof will aid in
14 carrying out the community and technical college programs and may
15 sell, lease or exchange, invest or expend the same or the proceeds,
16 rents, profits and income thereof according to the terms and
17 conditions thereof; and adopt regulations to govern the receipt and
18 expenditure of the proceeds, rents, profits and income thereof; and

19 ~~((16))~~ (17) The college board shall have the power of eminent
20 domain.

21 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.50
22 RCW to read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

11 (2) By December 1, 2026, the college board shall report to the
12 appropriate committees of the legislature, in accordance with RCW
13 43.01.036, on its plan, including recommendations for legislation,
14 for establishing a virtual campus by academic year 2028-29.

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

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

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