
SENATE BILL 5637

State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session

By Senators Hasegawa, Roach, Kohl-Welles, Chase, Keiser, and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/27/15. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to creating a peer mentoring program; amending
2 RCW 28B.12.030 and 28B.12.055; and adding a new chapter to Title 28B
3 RCW.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that peer mentoring
6 programs, such as the pilot program launched in fall 2009 at Western
7 Washington University, provide tangible and long-lasting benefits for
8 all elementary students, especially low-income students, students of
9 color, and first generation students, by encouraging school
10 attendance, setting aspirations for graduation from high school,
11 increasing awareness of life options, and inspiring dreams of a
12 higher education. The legislature further finds that, for the college
13 student mentors, the experience provides a valuable opportunity to
14 increase interest in career opportunities in the counseling and
15 teaching professions. The legislature thus intends to expand the peer
16 mentoring program across the state.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** By September 1, 2016, the six four-year
18 institutions of higher education shall create and implement a peer
19 mentoring program modeled after the pilot program launched in fall
20 2009 at Western Washington University. Working with the state board

1 for community and technical colleges, each of the six institutions
2 shall identify one or more community or technical colleges with which
3 to partner in the program.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The goals of the peer mentoring program
5 are to:

6 (1) Encourage at-risk elementary school students to complete high
7 school and attend college, boosting the percentage of Washington
8 students who continue on to college;

9 (2) Provide positive role models for at-risk students and allow
10 college students the opportunity to perform community service;

11 (3) Strengthen relationships between the communities, the
12 universities, the community colleges, the public schools, and area
13 youth;

14 (4) Introduce at-risk students to college and provide them an
15 opportunity to experience their public colleges and universities; and

16 (5) Increase the number of youth who view going to college as
17 both necessary and achievable.

18 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Each of the six four-year institutions of
19 higher education shall:

20 (1) Recruit college students interested in serving as mentors to
21 elementary school students;

22 (2) Identify one or more local elementary schools with
23 demonstrated need for a peer mentoring program;

24 (3) Develop a curriculum to train college student mentors, for
25 which college-level credit can be granted;

26 (4) Develop any necessary contracts or interagency agreements to
27 facilitate program implementation;

28 (5) Provide ongoing support and oversight of the program;

29 (6) Solicit grants, awards, and gifts from individuals,
30 businesses, agencies, and foundations;

31 (7) Provide community outreach and publicity for the program;

32 (8) Develop appropriate outcome measures and evaluate the program
33 at regular intervals; and

34 (9) Together with its community and technical college partners
35 and in close collaboration with other community and institutional
36 partners, submit a report to the legislature by December 1, 2017, and
37 December 1st of each odd-numbered year thereafter, that includes an
38 evaluation of the program and outcome measurements.

1 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28B.12.030 and 2012 c 229 s 519 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 As used in this chapter, the following words and terms shall have
4 the following meanings, unless the context shall clearly indicate
5 another or different meaning or intent:

6 (1) (~~The term~~) "Needy student" (~~shall~~) means a student
7 enrolled or accepted for enrollment at a postsecondary institution
8 who, according to a system of need analysis approved by the office of
9 student financial assistance, demonstrates a financial inability,
10 either parental, familial, or personal, to bear the total cost of
11 education for any semester or quarter. "Needy student" also includes
12 students in a peer mentoring program created in chapter 28B.--- RCW
13 (the new chapter created in section 7 of this act).

14 (2) (~~The term~~) "Eligible institution" (~~shall~~) means any
15 postsecondary institution in this state accredited by the Northwest
16 Association of Schools and Colleges, or a branch of a member
17 institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the
18 student achievement council for purposes of this section, that is
19 eligible for federal student financial aid assistance and has
20 operated as a nonprofit college or university delivering on-site
21 classroom instruction for a minimum of twenty consecutive years
22 within the state of Washington, or any public technical college in
23 the state.

24 **Sec. 6.** RCW 28B.12.055 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 145 are each
25 amended to read as follows:

26 (1) Within existing resources, the office of student financial
27 assistance shall establish the work-study opportunity grant for high-
28 demand occupations, a competitive grant program to encourage job
29 placements in high-demand fields. The office shall award grants to
30 eligible institutions of higher education that have developed a
31 partnership with a proximate organization willing to host work-study
32 placements. Partner organizations may be nonprofit organizations,
33 for-profit firms, or public agencies. Eligible institutions of higher
34 education must verify that all job placements will last for a minimum
35 of one academic quarter or one academic semester, depending on the
36 system used by the eligible institution of higher education.

37 (2) The office may adopt rules to identify high-demand fields for
38 purposes of this section. The legislature recognizes that the high-

1 demand fields identified by the office may differ in different
2 regions of the state.

3 (3) The office may award grants to eligible institutions of
4 higher education that cover both student wages and program
5 administration, including institutions participating in the peer
6 mentoring program in chapter 28B.--- RCW (the new chapter created in
7 section 7 of this act).

8 (4) The office shall develop performance benchmarks regarding
9 program success including, but not limited to, the number of students
10 served, the amount of employer contributions, and the number of
11 participating high-demand employers.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** Sections 1 through 4 of this act
13 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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