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HOUSE BILL 1946

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By Representatives Carlyle, Anderson, Wallace, Angel, White, Schmick, Hasegawa, Goodman, Sullivan, Haigh, Hudgins, Kenney, and Maxwell

Read first time 02/03/09. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to higher education online technology; adding a new  
2 section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that the state  
5 must educate more people to higher levels to adapt to the economic and  
6 social needs of the future. While our public colleges and universities  
7 have realized great success in helping students achieve their dreams,  
8 the legislature also recognizes that much more must be done to prepare  
9 current and future students for a twenty-first century economy. To  
10 raise the levels of skills and knowledge needed to sustain the state's  
11 economic prosperity and competitive position in a global environment,  
12 the public higher education system must reach out to every prospective  
13 student and citizen in unprecedented ways, with unprecedented focus.

14 To reach out to these citizens, the state must dismantle the  
15 barriers of geographic isolation, cost, and competing demands of work  
16 and family life. The state must create a more nimble system of  
17 learning that is student-centric, more welcoming of nontraditional and  
18 underserved students, easier to access and use, and more tailored to  
19 today's student needs and expectations.

1 Technology can play a key role in helping achieve this systemic  
2 goal. While only a decade ago access to personal computers was widely  
3 viewed a luxury, today computers, digital media, electronic  
4 information, and content have changed the nature of how students learn  
5 and instructors teach. This presents a vast, borderless opportunity to  
6 extend the reach and impact of the state's public educational  
7 institutions and educate more people to higher levels.

8 Each higher education institution and workforce program serves a  
9 unique group of students and as such, has customized its own technology  
10 solutions to meet its emerging needs. While local solutions may have  
11 served institutions of higher education in the past, paying for and  
12 operating multiple technology solutions, platforms, systems, models,  
13 agreements, and operational functionality for common applications and  
14 support services no longer serves students or the state.

15 Today's students access education differently. Rather than  
16 enrolling in one institution of higher education, staying two to four  
17 years and graduating, today's learners prefer a cafeteria approach;  
18 they often enroll in and move among multiple institutions - sometimes  
19 simultaneously. Rather than sitting in lecture halls taking notes,  
20 they may listen to podcasts of a lecture while grocery shopping or hold  
21 a virtual study group with classmates on a video chat room. They may  
22 prefer hybrid courses where part of their time is spent in the  
23 classroom and part is spent online. They prefer online access for  
24 commodity administrative services such as financial aid, admissions,  
25 transcript services, and more.

26 Institutions of higher education not only must rethink teaching and  
27 learning in a digital-networked world, but also must tailor their  
28 administrative and student services technologies to serve the mobile  
29 student who requires dynamic, customized information online and in real  
30 time. Because these relationships are changing so fast and so  
31 fundamentally, it is incumbent on the higher education system to  
32 transform its practices just as profoundly.

33 Therefore, the legislature intends to both study and implement its  
34 findings regarding how the state's public institutions of higher  
35 education can share core resources in instructional, including library,  
36 resources, student services, and administrative information technology  
37 resources, user help desk services, faculty professional development,  
38 and more. The study will examine how public institutions of higher

1 education can pursue a strategy of implementing single, shared,  
2 statewide commonly needed standards-based software, web hosting and  
3 support service solutions that are cost-effective, easily integrated,  
4 user-friendly, flexible, and constantly improving. The full range of  
5 applications that serve students, faculty, and administration shall be  
6 included. Expensive, proprietary, nonstandards-based customized  
7 applications, databases and services, and other resources that do not  
8 allow for the transparent sharing of information across institutions,  
9 agencies, and educational levels, including K-12, are inconsistent with  
10 the state's objective of educating more people to higher levels.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW  
12 to read as follows:

13 All institutions of higher education shall use common online  
14 learning technologies including, but not limited to, existing learning  
15 management and web conferencing systems currently managed and governed  
16 by the state board for community and technical colleges; and share  
17 professional development materials and activities related to effective  
18 use of these tools. The state board for community and technical  
19 colleges shall adjust existing vendor licenses to accommodate and  
20 provide enterprise services for institutions of higher education. The  
21 common learning management system shall be designed in a way that  
22 allows for easy sharing of courses, learning objects, and other digital  
23 content among the institutions of higher education. Institutions of  
24 higher education shall migrate to these common systems beginning July  
25 1, 2010, and be fully migrated no later than July 1, 2012. The state  
26 board for community and technical colleges shall convene  
27 representatives from each four-year institution of higher education to  
28 develop a shared fee structure.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) The K-20 educational network board shall  
30 convene a higher education technology transformation task force to  
31 improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of education  
32 relative to the strategic and operational use of technology in public  
33 education.

34 (2) The task force shall be composed of one member from each public  
35 baccalaureate institution of higher education, six members from the  
36 community and technical colleges, and one member each from the state

1 board for community and technical colleges, the higher education  
2 coordinating board, the workforce training and education coordinating  
3 board, the department of information services, and the council of  
4 presidents. The task force shall select a chair from its membership.

5 (3) The task force shall prepare a report that includes a plan to  
6 improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of public higher  
7 education relative to the strategic and operational use of technology  
8 in higher education.

9 (4) In developing the plan, the institutions of higher education  
10 and their partners, identified in this section, shall take the  
11 following actions:

12 (a) Investigate similar efforts, strategies, programs, and options  
13 in other states, of private providers of higher education in the state,  
14 and global consortia related to:

15 (i) Online learning technologies including but not limited to:  
16 Learning management, ePortfolio, web conferencing systems, and other  
17 education applications;

18 (ii) Personalized online student services including but not limited  
19 to: Recruitment, admissions, retention, advising, academic planning,  
20 course catalogs, transfer, and financial aid management;

21 (iii) Integrated online administrative tools including but not  
22 limited to: Student information management, financial management,  
23 payroll, human resources, and data collection and analysis;

24 (iv) Sharing library resources including but not limited to:  
25 Copyrighted physical and e-books, and consolidated electronic journals  
26 and research database licensing and other models;

27 (v) Methods and open licensing options for effectively sharing  
28 digital content including but not limited to: Open courseware, open  
29 textbooks, open journals, and open learning objects;

30 (vi) Methods for pooling, coordinating, and otherwise more  
31 efficiently managing enrollments so colleges with extra enrollment  
32 space in online courses can easily and efficiently make those spaces  
33 available to students at other colleges, or to high school students  
34 through existing dual-credit programs, without economic, governance, or  
35 institutional penalty or disincentive from the provider or recipient  
36 institution;

37 (vii) Methods for ensuring online courses meet agreed upon

1 instructional guidelines, policies, and quality, and methods for  
2 sharing these best practices to improve traditional courses' quality;

3 (b) Develop a process and timeline for the implementation of a  
4 statewide approach based on the investigation in (a) of this  
5 subsection;

6 (c) Focus on statewide capability and standards that enable the  
7 efficient use of common applications, web hosting services, user  
8 support, staff training, and consolidated software licenses and open  
9 educational resources;

10 (d) Identify the metrics that can be used to gauge success;

11 (e) Conduct a comprehensive audit of existing resources used by  
12 public institutions of higher education or agencies including but not  
13 limited to technology-related: Employees; infrastructure; application  
14 licenses and costs; web hosting facilities and services; digital  
15 content licenses; student, faculty, and administrative applications and  
16 services; and the amounts and uses of technology fees charged to  
17 students. The failure of the individual public institution of higher  
18 education or agency to fully, accurately, and thoroughly account for  
19 these resources and fees in detail shall expressly be stated in the  
20 task force report;

21 (f) Recommend strategies and specific tactics to: (i) Reduce  
22 duplication of applications, web hosting, and support services; (ii)  
23 effectively and efficiently use technology to share costs, data, and  
24 faculty professional development; (iii) improve the quality of  
25 instruction; and (iv) increase student access, transfer capability, and  
26 the quality of student, faculty, and administration services; and

27 (g) Recommend governance models, funding models, and accountability  
28 measures to achieve these and related objectives.

29 (5) The public institutions of higher education and their partners  
30 shall jointly report their findings and recommendations to the  
31 appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2010. A  
32 preliminary report shall be delivered to appropriate committees of the  
33 legislature by December 1, 2009.

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