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## Higher Education Committee

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### HB 1908

**Brief Description:** Creating a peer mentoring program to encourage elementary school students to attend college.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hasegawa, Seaquist, Santos, Probst, Kenney and Frockt.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directs the six four-year institutions of higher education to create and implement peer mentoring programs modeled after Western Washington University's Compass 2 Campus program by September 1, 2012.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 3/24/11

**Staff:** Cece Clynch (786-7195).

**Background:**

Pursuant to 2009 legislation, Western Washington University (WWU) created an early outreach, peer mentoring pilot program named Compass 2 Campus. The program, designed to inspire academic success and introduce elementary students to educational opportunities, pairs Whatcom and Skagit County fifth grade students from selected Title 1 schools with WWU student mentors.

Compass 2 Campus is run by a full time volunteer program director, with the assistance of ten WWU students who are supported with work study dollars obtained through a Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) community service project grant. Other costs are supported through private funds raised by the program director and the WWU Foundation. The ten work study students, referred to as lead students, assist the volunteer director and help:

- manage the field placements of WWU student mentors;
- collaborate with principals, counselors, and teachers to identify and schedule fifth grade students needing tutoring and mentoring;
- schedule; and
- keep the records.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

In the first year of the program 775 WWU students participated as mentors, providing approximately 28,000 hours of service to participating fifth graders. The initial mentoring course, a three credit 200 level course, was offered to WWU students in the fall of 2009. This course was designed to teach mentoring skills and dispositions so that college students enrolled in the program could have a working and developing knowledge of appropriate ways to interact with and tutor students. About one third of the enrolled students were declared or anticipated education majors. Once the elementary schools were selected, the principals and fifth grade teachers received in-service training about the program. Community members were also recruited to participate as volunteers, including volunteers from Bellingham Technical College, Whatcom Community College, Skagit Valley College, and the Northwest Indian College.

On October 27, 2009, a field trip for the fifth graders to the WWU campus was held. This large event included 850 fifth graders, 450 WWU students mentors, 75 community volunteers, several hundred university professors and staff members, and several visiting legislators and community leaders. All of the partnering colleges participated by staffing information tables on fifth grade tour day. The day included tours, a welcome and mock graduation robing in the gym, visits to classrooms, the library, residence halls, and the WWU grounds. The fifth graders had lunch with their mentors and had the opportunity to talk to them about college.

After the tour day, WWU student mentors began to develop relationships with their mentees. Each enrolled WWU student selected a school for their site placement and visited that school each week of the quarter for a minimum of four hours to work with the fifth graders and help with academic activities.

The Compass 2 Campus program began its second year in the fall of 2010. There are 308 WWU students enrolled and receiving college credit, 60 volunteer college students returning from the 2009 year, and 900 fifth graders. A field trip to the campus took place on October 26, 2010. In order to follow 2009's fifth graders, who are now 6th graders, the program has moved into four new middle schools.

In its initial 2009-2010 Legislative Report for Compass 2 Campus, WWU reported that the following goals had been met or were continuing to be met:

1. Providing positive role models for at risk-students.
2. Introducing at-risk students to college and providing them with an opportunity to experience the university first hand.
3. Allowing college students the opportunity to perform community service in a structured setting.
4. Strengthening relationships between the community, university, and area youth.
5. Developing a model that is scalable statewide.

The results with respect to two other goals were reported as indeterminate at this time due to their long term nature:

1. Encouraging at-risk students to complete high school and attend some form of higher education, thus boosting the number of Washington students who continue on to college.
2. Increasing the number of youth who view going to college as both necessary and achievable.

A research team has been convened involving several WWU faculty members who will design data collection for the purposes of determining efficacy of the Compass 2 Campus program.

WWU President Bruce Shepard concludes his December 30, 2010 cover letter to the Legislature by noting that the program has had a spectacular launch but is not sustainable beyond the pilot program without future funding. According to Dr. Shepard, "Due to the current state budget crisis, we have attached a Decision Package Title: Compass 2 Campus, from Western's 2011-13 Operating Budget that enables the continued operation and only a limited expansion of the Compass 2 Campus program. The demand and the needs in the targeted populations are growing and when the economy recovers we are anxious to bring you our plan to expand this program statewide." This decision package includes \$399,549 in general fund monies, most of which is for salaries, wages, and benefits for faculty and classified staff, as well as 25 student hourly workers.

**Summary of Bill:**

By September 12, 2012, all six four-year institutions of higher education must create and implement a peer mentoring program modeled after WWU's Compass 2 Campus program. Working with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, each of the six institutions must identify one or more community and technical colleges with which to partner in the program.

In instituting a peer mentoring program, the six institutions must:

- recruit college student mentors;
- identify one or more local elementary schools with demonstrated need for such a program;
- develop a curriculum to train mentors;
- develop necessary contracts or interagency agreements;
- provide ongoing support and oversight;
- solicit grants, awards, and gifts;
- provide community outreach and publicity;
- develop appropriate evaluative criteria and conduct periodic evaluations; and
- report to the Legislature by December 1, 2013.

The HECB is allowed to award work-study opportunity grants to the institutions to cover work study wages for the lead students.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 10, 2011.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.