

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2400

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Higher Education

**Title:** An act relating to a mentoring and service learning opportunity program for students in K-12 and postsecondary education.

**Brief Description:** Concerning mentoring and service learning opportunities in education.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Walkinshaw, Moscoso, Kagi, Tarleton, Sawyer, Fitzgibbon, Riccelli, Morrell, Lias, Tharinger, Ryu, Fey, Gregerson, Santos and Pollet.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Higher Education: 1/28/14, 2/4/14 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Finds that mentoring and service-learning opportunities help to improve the academic success of low-performing, high-risk students in K-12 and postsecondary education and outlines the intention to increase these opportunities.
- Directs Western Washington University to host a statewide consortium of public and private institutions of higher education and develop and administer a state campus compact with the purpose of providing and increasing the number of campus-based mentoring and service-learning opportunities in K-12 education and at eligible institutions of higher education.
- Outlines program design elements and accountability measures.

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**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 15 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Hansen, Johnson, Muri, Reykdal, Sawyer, Sells, Tarleton, Walkinshaw, Walsh and Wylie.

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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.*

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Hargrove, Magendanz, Scott and Smith.

**Staff:** Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

**Background:**

The Washington Campus Compact.

The mission of the Washington Campus Compact (Compact), hosted by Western Washington University, is to create academic and co-curricular service opportunities for students to develop the skills and habits of citizenship, to encourage the engagement of students and faculty in community-based scholarship that addresses societal concerns, and to foster the development of collaborative partnerships among campuses and with communities. Membership of the Compact includes all six public baccalaureate institutions, private and nonprofit baccalaureate degree granting institutions, and community and technical colleges in both eastern and western Washington.

A major project of the Compact is the Retention Project that was launched in 2006. Between 2010 and 2013 this project engaged over 10,000 college students to serve as mentors to low income, at-risk, and first-generation college students and K-12 students. In 2013 the Retention Project served over 10,000 mentees.

Other programs of the Compact include "Students in Service" and "Connect2Complete." The "Students in Service" program, that operated between 2006 and 2011, was a national service-learning program that engaged students in part-time AmeriCorps programs. The "Connect2Complete" program, funded through the Gates Foundation, connected at-risk, first-generation students with peer advocates.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The Legislature finds that mentoring and service-learning opportunities help to improve the academic success of low-performing, high-risk students in K-12 and postsecondary education. Western Washington University is directed to host a statewide consortium of public and private institutions of higher education to develop and administer the Compact with the purpose of providing and increasing the number of campus-based mentoring and service-learning opportunities in K-12 education and at eligible institutions of higher education.

The Compact must partner with nonprofit organizations that provide mentoring services including:

- a nonprofit organization that provides higher education advocacy and opportunity to young people struggling to overcome poverty and adversity in King County; and
- a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for fifth to twelfth grade students from traditionally underrepresented and diverse backgrounds in Whatcom and Skagit counties to be mentored by university students.

The mentoring and service-learning opportunities developed under the Compact are intended to serve students in K-12 and higher education. For K-12 students:

- those who are at risk of dropping out of school;
- those who are not on track to complete their high school diploma on time;
- students from low-income families;
- students in or transitioning from foster care; or
- students from a family with no previous experience in attending college.

Students who are targeted for this program in postsecondary education are:

- students who are not on track to complete their degree or certificate on time;
- students enrolled in one or more pre-college level course or program;
- students from a low-income family;
- students in or transitioning from foster care;
- students from a family with no previous experience in attending college; or
- veterans of the armed services.

The mentoring and service-learning opportunities of the Compact must be designed to increase student engagement in learning and postsecondary education; and develop workforce, financial literacy, and citizenship skills. They must be designed to improve student attitudes and behaviors, and improve academic success and retention. Training and outreach to postsecondary students to serve as mentors must be addressed. Accountability measures to assess the impact of mentoring programs include: measures of academic improvement; retention and completion rates; access to institutions of higher education; and development of workforce and citizenship skills, attitudes, and behaviors. The Compact is directed to disseminate best practices statewide.

#### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

A direction is added that the Compact must partner with nonprofit organizations that provide mentoring services including:

- a nonprofit organization that provides higher education advocacy and opportunity to young people struggling to overcome poverty and adversity in King County; and
- a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for fifth to twelfth grade students from traditionally underrepresented and diverse backgrounds in Whatcom and Skagit counties to be mentored by university students.

The appropriation directing that \$1.375 million for the year ending June 30, 2015, for the purposes of the act, is removed.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Data shows that mentoring services for students transitioning from K-12 to postsecondary education can have long-term positive effects on completion and retention. Transition points are the weakest link and when students are the most at risk of dropping out. These mentoring and service-learning programs are important because they connect higher education students on campus and K-12 students get a glimpse of campus life. The work of the mentoring consortium is aligned with the state's overarching educational attainment goals. These mentoring programs help students to prepare financial aid applications, meet high school graduation requirements, and take career preparation courses. This is a way of codifying some of the best practices in mentoring and service-learning. Many middle- and upper-income students get help from families but this is important for many underrepresented students who do not have a family that can provide this type of support.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Walkinshaw, prime sponsor; Char Sarte-Prince and Rich Dustin, Western Washington University; Rebecca Kenna-Schenk, Washington Student Achievement Council; Jim Huckabay, Council of Faculty Representatives; Matthew Bobbink, Washington Student Association and Western Washington University; Ellen Shortt Sanchez, The Evergreen State College; Miraclejoy Curtis and Jordan Fisher, Connect2Complete; Jeff Corey and Cristina Gonzalez, Seattle Education Access; Rhosetta Rhodes, Whitworth University; and Terry Kinzel, Big Bend Community College.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** Jennifer Hine, Washington Campus Compact; and Joel Zylstra, Pacific Lutheran University.