

CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5401**

67th Legislature  
2021 Regular Session

Passed by the Senate March 2, 2021  
Yeas 48 Nays 0

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**President of the Senate**

Passed by the House April 7, 2021  
Yeas 96 Nays 2

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**Speaker of the House of  
Representatives**

Approved

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**Governor of the State of Washington**

CERTIFICATE

I, Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of the Senate of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5401** as passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives on the dates hereon set forth.

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**Secretary**

FILED

**Secretary of State  
State of Washington**

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**SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5401**

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Passed Legislature - 2021 Regular Session

**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2021 Regular Session**

**By** Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Nguyen, Rivers, Cleveland, Das, Dhingra, Gildon, Hasegawa, Holy, Keiser, Kuderer, Liias, Lovelett, Mullet, Saldaña, Stanford, Wellman, and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 02/10/21.

1       AN ACT Relating to degrees in computer science; amending RCW  
2       28B.50.825; and creating a new section.

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

4       NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 1.**   The legislature finds it essential that  
5       Washington students, especially low-income students and students of  
6       color, have the necessary credentials to secure the high-demand jobs  
7       of the future. Washington is fortunate to be home to a large, and  
8       growing, technology sector. The technology sector in Washington  
9       currently has more than 24,000 job openings, most of which require a  
10      four-year bachelor of science degree in computer science. The  
11      legislature also finds that the state imported four times as many  
12      computer science graduates than it produced in state. The legislature  
13      also finds that the state can do a better job of training Washington  
14      residents to secure these living wage jobs of the future.  
15      Additionally, of the 1,883 computer science degrees awarded in  
16      Washington during the 2018-19 school year, only 3.8 percent were  
17      awarded to African American students, 5.6 percent to Hispanic  
18      students, and less than 1 percent to Native Americans. The  
19      legislature further finds that Washington's competitiveness in the  
20      global economy requires the state to ensure companies are able to  
21      hire a qualified workforce of Washington residents. To achieve the

1 goals set forth in the workforce education investment act,  
2 specifically 70 percent postsecondary credential attainment, the  
3 legislature finds that we need to expand access to the high-demand  
4 field of computer science, especially to students of color.

5 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.50.825 and 2016 sp.s. c 33 s 1 are each amended  
6 to read as follows:

7 (1) Subject to approval by the college board, (~~Bellevue college~~  
8 ~~is~~) community colleges and technical colleges are authorized to  
9 offer bachelor of science degrees in computer science.

10 (2) (~~Bellevue college~~) Community colleges and technical  
11 colleges may develop the curriculum for and design and deliver  
12 courses leading to a bachelor of science degree in computer science.

13 (3) Degree programs developed under this section are subject to  
14 approval by the college board under RCW 28B.50.090 before a college  
15 may enroll students in upper-division courses.

16 (4)(a) Colleges may submit an application to the college board.  
17 The college board shall review the applications and select the  
18 colleges using objective criteria including, but not limited to:

19 (i) The college demonstrates the capacity to make a long-term  
20 commitment of resources to build and sustain a high quality program;

21 (ii) The college has or can readily engage faculty appropriately  
22 qualified to develop and deliver a high quality curriculum at the  
23 baccalaureate level;

24 (iii) The college can demonstrate demand for the proposed program  
25 from a sufficient number of students within its service area to make  
26 the program cost-effective and feasible to operate;

27 (iv) The college can demonstrate that employers demand the level  
28 of technical training proposed within the program, making it cost-  
29 effective for students to seek the degree; and

30 (v) The proposed program fills a gap in options available for  
31 students because it is not offered by a public four-year institution  
32 of higher education in the college's geographic area or if there is a  
33 shortage of programs demanded by industry and workforce.

34 (b) Applications may not be submitted earlier than December 1,  
35 2021.

1       (5) A community college offering a bachelor of science degree in  
2 computer science on the effective date of this section is exempt from  
3 the requirements of subsection (4) of this section.

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