

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1013

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, March 24, 1999

Title: An act relating to the Washington fund for innovation and quality in higher education program.

Brief Description: Changing the goals and priorities for grants under the Washington fund for innovation and quality education program.

Sponsors: House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Carlson, Radcliff, Dunn and Sheahan).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 3/22/99, 3/24/99 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Bauer, Horn, McAuliffe, Sheahan and B. Sheldon.

Staff: Natalie Adams (786-7444)

Background: In an effort to encourage the development of innovative and collaborative solutions to educational issues of statewide need, the Legislature established the Washington Fund for Excellence in Education. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) was responsible for administering the program.

The 1991 legislation identified three issues of critical statewide need: (1) improving rates of participation and completion at each educational level; (2) recognizing needs of special populations of students; and (3) improving the effectiveness of education by better coordinating communication and understanding between sectors.

The 1991 act also specified priority guidelines for awarding grants. The original guidelines included: (1) minority and diversity initiatives; (2) K-12 teacher preparation models to encourage collaboration between higher education and K-12; and (3) articulation and transfer activities to ease the transition from K-12 to higher education.

In 1996, the Legislature renamed the program the Washington Fund for Innovation and Quality in Higher Education and specified new grant priority guidelines. The 1996 priority guidelines included the three original guidelines and added: (1) multi-institutional or multi-faculty development and evaluation of collaborative instructional programs, instructional technology, and a degree offered entirely on the internet; (2) individual institutional or faculty pilot programs to improve efficiency, improve student retention, develop

competencies for general education, and allow contracting with public or private institutions to provide services; and (3) other innovative proposals.

To date, the program has not received funding.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Fund for Innovation and Quality in Higher Education is updated and restructured. The restructuring of the program allows the HECB to administer the program for the four-year institutions and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to administer the program for the two-year institutions. Both boards share common goals and guidelines.

In addition to updating the language of the 1996 program, new areas of statewide need are identified as: (1) recognizing needs of special populations of students; (2) furthering the development of learner-centered, technology assisted course delivery; (3) furthering the development of competency-based measurements of student achievement; and (4) increasing the collaboration among public and private sector institutions of higher education.

The priority guidelines are updated to address the related areas of need.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This program and the concepts it supports were established by the Legislature in 1991 to inspire innovative ways to teach and learn and increase collaborative efforts. To date, the program has not received funding. This bill updates and restructures the program. The goals and priorities have changed the program's focus by addressing student-centered needs such as competency, information technology, and diversity. The restructuring of the program allows the HECB to administer the program for four-year institutions and the SBCTC to administer the program for two-year institutions. We would really like to see the program funded as it will allow our institutions to remain on the cutting edge.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Pro: Representative Don Carlson, prime sponsor; Kim Merriman, The Evergreen State College; Cindy Hough, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.