
Higher Education Committee

HB 1726

Brief Description: Creating Bellevue College.

Sponsors: Representatives Maxwell, Anderson, Carlyle, Rodne, Eddy, Springer, Hunter, Clibborn, Goodman, Hasegawa and Hudgins.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates Bellevue College, an institution of higher education that is a combination of a community college and a four-year institution.
- Authorizes Bellevue College to offer workforce degrees and certificates, academic associate and bachelor's degrees, and the bachelor's of applied science degree.
- Retains collectively bargaining practices under rules adopted by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.
- Retains academic employee eligibility for cost of living increases under Initiative 732.
- Deposits building fees into two separate accounts; fees associated with upper-division instruction are directed to the newly created Bellevue College capital projects account; fees associated with lower-division instruction are directed to the Community and Technical College capital projects account.
- Creates model schools and training departments for teacher education.
- Retains eligibility for the Opportunity Grant program.

Hearing Date: 2/10/09

Staff: Andi Smith (786-7304)

Background:

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 1957 wanting their own local college to support the region's growth, Eastside citizens and school district officials formed a community college planning committee. They convinced voters in 1962 to pass a \$575,000 levy to establish a two-year college. Residents and business people subsequently formed The Greater Eastside Community College Advisory Council and lobbied the State Legislature until, in 1965, the Legislature granted \$30,000 to underwrite planning of a community college for the Eastside.

Bellevue Community College officially opened its doors on January 3, 1966, with evening classes at Newport Senior High School. Construction of a permanent campus began two years later, on a 96-acre site. Growth continued in the 1970s, as buildings were brought on line to complete the new campus and serve the growing student body.

The 1980s brought a period of slow or no growth as state funding cuts, in response to a serious economic downturn, confronted the college with budget challenges. The college reduced the size of its staff and cut enrollment. Improved economic times returned in the 1990s with enrollments increasing throughout the decade. The 2007-08 enrollment at Bellevue Community College was 33,869.

In 2006 Bellevue Community College was authorized by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer the Bachelor's of Applied Science (BAS) in Radiation and Imagine Sciences. A BAS degree differs from a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree in that it builds on a technical associate degree in two ways: 1) the upper-division training either provides further coursework in the same professional/technical field studied in the applied associate degree (e.g. nursing or engineering technology); or 2) it provides management specialization for technical workers (e.g. allied health management or hospitality management).

In order to offer BAS degrees, Bellevue Community College had to seek and gain approval for reaccreditation as a four-year institution by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Bellevue was granted "candidate" status from NWCCU to offer baccalaureate degrees and, under this authority, began to offer the BAS degree. Bellevue Community College retains full accreditation status for associate-level degrees and will undergo a full accreditation review in 2010.

Summary of Bill:

Bellevue College is established. The trustees for the Bellevue Community College District become trustees of Bellevue College (BC) on October 1, 2010, and serve until the expiration of their current terms.

BC is authorized to award certificates, associate, bachelor of applied science, bachelor of arts, and bachelor of science degrees. The college is not authorized to offer graduate degrees.

In addition to the variety of financial aid available at other four year institutions, BC students enrolled in Opportunity Grant eligible programs of study may receive Opportunity Grants administered by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Building fees collected from students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs are deposited in a separate capital account for BC capital projects. Building fees collected from students enrolled in associate degree programs are deposited in the Community and Technical College Capital Projects Account. BC may waive up to .75 percent of its gross operating fees for students enrolled in associate degree programs and up to 2 percent of operating fee revenue for students enrolled in baccalaureate degree programs. The tuition waiver limitation for BC is 10 percent of total gross operating revenue.

BC may provide model schools or training departments in which BC students have actual practice in teaching or courses under the supervision and observation of critic teachers. All schools or departments involved organize and direct their work being cognizant of public school needs. The board of trustees of BC must file with the board of the school district, or districts in which BC is situated, a certified statement showing an estimate of the number of public school pupils who will be required to make up the model school and specifying the number of pupils required for each grade. The board of the school district or districts must then apportion, for attendance to the model school or training department, a sufficient number of pupils from the public schools under the supervision of the board and will furnish to BC the number of pupils required at the facility. BC may refuse to accept any pupil that would tend to reduce the efficiency of the model school or training department.

Annually, on or before the date for reporting the school attendance of the school district in which the model school or training department is situated, for the purpose of taxation for the support of the common schools, BC must file a report showing the number of common school pupils at each model school or training department during the school last year, and the period of their attendance in the same form that reports of public schools are made. Any superintendent of the school district affected must, in reporting the attendance in the school district, segregate the attendance at the model school or training department from the attendance in the other schools of said district. The attendance is credited, if credit is given, to the school district in which the pupil resides.

Provisions relating to governance and capital project funding for institutions of higher education are modified to reflect the addition of BC and its coordinated structure.

Academic employees of Bellevue College are still eligible to receive annual cost of living increases per the passage of initiative number 732.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 9, 2009.

Effective Date: The bill contains multiple effective dates.