
Higher Education Committee

HB 1400

Brief Description: Increasing transparency in higher education by requiring budgeting information to be available online.

Sponsors: Representatives Haler, Pollet, Zeiger, Van Werven, Bergquist, Stambaugh, Buys, Hargrove, Muri, Condotta and Tharinger.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Education Data Center (ERDC) to post on its data dashboard the department-level budgets of each institution of higher education, including budget planning and expenditures.
- Requires the ERDC to obtain the data and develop a format to display the information.

Hearing Date: 2/3/15

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

In Washington, the institutions of higher education are the state universities, the regional universities, the state college, the community colleges, and the technical colleges. These public four-year institutions and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges are required to work with the Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) to develop data-sharing and research agreements to facilitate the work of the ERDC.

The ERDC, in the Office of Financial Management, conducts analysis of higher education programs and, in general, education issues. The ERDC maintains an online dashboard that displays information for each public four-year institution of higher education, such as data on enrollment, progression, graduation, and other metrics.

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.

The ERDC also posts higher education finance reports online to improve productivity and public accountability for performance in higher education. The data in these reports comes from information submitted by the institutions to the United States Department of Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Only institutions that participate in federal financial aid programs are required to submit data. In Washington, about 125 institutions, including private institutions, report annually to the IPEDS. The published finance reports include revenue and expenditure information, but not to the department-level.

Summary of Bill:

The ERDC must post on its data dashboard the department-level budgets of each institution of higher education, including budget planning and expenditures. For institutions without a department structure, the ERDC must post comparable budget information.

The ERDC must post the department-level budget plans and budget expenditures to the data dashboard within 60 days of an institution's adoption of its annual fiscal budget plan and completion of its fiscal year budget.

The ERDC is responsible for obtaining the budget and spending data from each institution, and for developing the format used to display the budget information.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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