AN ACT Relating to the helping homeless college students act; adding a new section to chapter 28B.50 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28B.77 RCW; and providing expiration dates.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. A new section is added to chapter 28B.50 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The college board shall select four college districts, two on each side of the crest of the Cascade mountain range, to participate in a pilot program to provide assistance to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school. The college districts chosen to participate in the pilot program must provide certain accommodations to these students that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

   (a) Access to laundry facilities;
   (b) Access to storage;
   (c) Access to locker room and shower facilities;
   (d) Reduced-price meals or meal plans, and access to food banks;
   (e) Access to technology;
   (f) Access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and
(g) Case management services.

(2) The college districts may also establish plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing to accommodate the needs of students experiencing homelessness and students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school.

(3) The college districts participating in the pilot program shall provide a joint report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023, that includes at least the following information:

(a) The number of students experiencing homelessness and the number of students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school who were attending a community or technical college during the pilot program. The college board shall coordinate with all of the community and technical colleges to collect voluntary data on how many students experiencing homelessness are attending the community and technical colleges;

(b) The number of students assisted by the pilot program;

(c) Strategies for accommodating students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students; and

(d) Legislative recommendations for how students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students could be better served.

(4) The pilot program expires July 1, 2023.

(5) This section expires January 1, 2024.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. A new section is added to chapter 28B.77 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The council shall select two public four-year institutions of higher education, one on each side of the crest of the Cascade mountain range, to participate in a pilot program to provide assistance to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school. The four-year institutions of higher education chosen to participate in the pilot program must provide certain accommodations to these students that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Access to laundry facilities;

(b) Access to storage;

(c) Access to locker room and shower facilities;

(d) Reduced-price meals or meal plans, and access to food banks;

(e) Access to technology;
(f) Access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and

(g) Case management services.

(2) The four-year institutions of higher education may also establish plans to develop surplus property for affordable housing to accommodate the needs of students experiencing homelessness and students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school.

(3) The four-year institutions of higher education participating in the pilot program shall provide a joint report to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2023, that includes at least the following information:

(a) The number of students experiencing homelessness and the number of students who were in the foster care system when they graduated high school who were attending a four-year institution of higher education during the pilot program. The council shall coordinate with all of the four-year institutions of higher education to collect voluntary data on how many students experiencing homelessness are attending the four-year institutions of higher education;

(b) The number of students assisted by the pilot program;

(c) Strategies for accommodating students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students; and

(d) Legislative recommendations for how students experiencing homelessness and former foster care students could be better served.

(4) The pilot program expires July 1, 2023.

(5) This section expires January 1, 2024.

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