

WAC 131-32-040 Dissemination of course and enrollment information. (1) For the purposes of this section, "recruitment" is defined as information and activities which attempt to persuade potential students to attend a certain college—information used to compete for enrollment. "Information" is defined as the factual description of course availabilities, enrollment requirements, and college characteristics. However, excessive dissemination of what would otherwise be construed as legitimate course and enrollment information is viewed as competition or recruitment.

(2) In general, it is not the policy of the community and technical colleges to compete with each other or with other institutions of higher education for enrollment. It is the general policy of the community and technical colleges to inform the citizens of their districts of the programs and services available to them.

(3) The Community and Technical College Act (RCW 28B.50.020) requires the college system to offer educational service "to every citizen." Traditional methods of informing potential students—i.e., communication with high school counselors and students—reach only a small proportion of the potential enrollment, less than fifteen percent a year. In order to reach the rest of their potential student body—which is essentially the adult population at large—community and technical colleges utilize mass media dissemination, principally of quarterly course announcements.

(4) Mass dissemination of unsolicited course and enrollment information shall be held within district boundaries except where postal and media distribution patterns prohibit. Exceptions include regional activities such as fairs, high school-college days, and public exhibits in which the college is invited to participate. It is appropriate for a community or technical college to make known to the citizens of its district courses and programs offered exclusively by neighboring districts.

(5) It is appropriate to provide each adult citizen in the district with course and enrollment information once during each quarter on an unsolicited basis. In heavily populated areas, budgetary considerations may rule out such total distribution. Quarterly course announcements should be prepared and distributed in a way that provides the best balance between minimum cost and maximum dissemination of course information to district citizens. However, dissemination of such announcements at college expense to persons other than those requesting them shall be limited to one of the following methods:

- Mailing to district boxholders (direct mail)
- Newspaper advertisement
- Newspaper insert
- Other method of mass distribution

It may be appropriate for one district to disseminate quarterly course announcements to boxholders or recipients of newspaper inserts residing in other districts. Such arrangements shall not take place until both districts have agreed to the arrangement in writing.

(6) News releases and free public service announcements are an appropriate method of calling attention to new programs or to space availability in existing courses and programs. Public service announcements and news releases shall not be sent to media outside the college district except in those areas where more than one institution is served by the same primary media.

(7) Publications which provide factual information on specific instructional programs, on special programs or on special services provide an efficient method of responding to inquiries from potential students. Their unsolicited dissemination shall be limited to the district of origin.

(8) Districts may purchase advertising to provide supplementary course and registration announcements when it can be demonstrated that paid advertising is more cost-effective than other methods. In areas where media serve more than one college district, colleges should give preference to pooled advertisements rather than individual college advertisements to attract enrollment. Paid advertising shall not be placed with media outside the college district except in areas where more than one institution is served by the same primary news media.

(9) Where community and technical college districts overlap, the colleges shall plan and implement the dissemination of course and enrollment information so as to avoid unnecessary competition with each other and with adjacent districts for potential students. Issues arising from the process will be adjudicated under the provisions of the regional planning agreement specified by RCW 28B.50.215.

(10) In the event that state-funded enrollments are generated through interdistrict recruiting efforts that are contrary to the provisions of this section, the operating budget allocation of the intruding district may be adjusted by action of the state board. Budget allocation adjustments shall be determined by deducting funding attributable to enrollments generated by activities contrary to this section. The state board shall take into consideration the number of interdistrict enrollments that reasonably could have been expected to occur regardless of the interdistrict recruiting effort. At the request of either district that is party to an interdistrict recruiting dispute, the state board shall hold a hearing on the issues at dispute. The hearing will be held under the provisions of WAC 131-08-007. The board as a result of such hearings may approve a settlement that contains alternatives to the provisions of this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.060, [28B.50.]090, [28B.50.]140(11) and [28B.50.]215. WSR 92-13-020 (Order 138, Resolution No. 92-05-23), § 131-32-040, filed 6/8/92, effective 7/9/92. Statutory Authority: RCW 28B.50.090(11) and 28B.50.060. WSR 86-22-028 (Order 112, Resolution No. 86-45), § 131-32-040, filed 10/30/86.]