

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6468

AS REPORTED BY COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 4, 1994

**Brief Description:** Creating the postsecondary education resource center.

**SPONSORS:** Senators Bauer, Prince and Drew

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION**

**Majority Report:** Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Prince, Quigley, Sheldon and West.

**Staff:** Jean Six (786-7423)

**Hearing Dates:** February 2, 1994; February 4, 1994

**BACKGROUND:**

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) through the 1992 Update of the Master Plan and the 1993 Student Financial Aid Policy Study urged additional state efforts to ensure that increasing numbers of low-income and minority students complete high school and prepare academically for postsecondary education. In May 1993 the HECB staff was authorized to seek legislative authorization and funding to develop an outreach information center similar in concept to Boston's Higher Education Information Center.

The role of the center shall be to coordinate and deliver comprehensive information on postsecondary education and training opportunities; provide counseling in career, academic and financial aid planning; target efforts toward low-income and disadvantaged populations; complement efforts by public and private secondary and postsecondary institutions in sharing information about programs and opportunities; and improve coordination among all sectors, business, community organizations, and educational institutions at all levels.

**SUMMARY:**

A postsecondary education resource center is established in King County; an auxiliary postsecondary education resource center is created in Yakima County. The center will provide information and services to middle and secondary school students and their families, out-of-school youth, and adult workers. Through collaboration with public schools, colleges, higher education organizations and community service groups, the center will augment the delivery of information.

The HECB shall direct the functions of the center. The center shall have an advisory board representing high school counselors, financial aid administrators, college admissions officers, business, community organizations, and organizations providing postsecondary information services to Washington residents. The board shall evaluate the effect of services on assisted populations and report findings to the Governor and fiscal and higher education committees of the Legislature by December 1998.

The postsecondary education resource center shall (1) serve as a repository and clearinghouse for information on postsecondary opportunities; (2) employ staff with expertise in career, academic and financial aid planning; (3) take actions to increase public awareness of the importance of postsecondary education; (4) provide information to high school counselors and other in-state organizations that provide information on postsecondary education opportunities; (5) ensure that the center does not duplicate other existing services, but increases the availability of information to those who seek it; (6) build and strengthen relationships with organizations locally, statewide, and nationally to share resources and provide better service; and (7) provide consultative services to communities seeking to establish similar programs at other sites throughout the state.

These outreach activities shall be supported by funding from federal and state governments and private entities.

**Appropriation:** none

**Revenue:** none

**Fiscal Note:** requested January 24, 1994

**TESTIMONY FOR:**

The centers will not duplicate current services. Postsecondary education is the most important link to job opportunity. This counseling effort must reach out to undereducated adults as well as to the traditional student who is a recent high school graduate. The philosophy of this proposal recognizes the importance of early intervention at the middle school level for encouraging students to stay in school, graduate from high school and be academically prepared for college.

**TESTIMONY AGAINST:** None

**TESTIFIED:** Shirley Ort, HECB (pro)