

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1544

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Higher Education, March 26, 2013

**Title:** An act relating to educational specialist degrees at regional universities.

**Brief Description:** Authorizing educational specialist degrees at Central Washington University and Western Washington University.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lytton, Seaquist, Johnson, Smith, Sells, Ryu, Morrell, Roberts, Bergquist, Springer, Pollet and Santos.

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/08/13, 98-0.

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education: 3/19/13, 3/26/13 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chair; Becker, Vice Chair; Kohl-Welles, Ranking Member; Baumgartner, Frockt, McAuliffe and Tom.

**Staff:** Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

**Background:** One of the primary purposes of regional universities is to offer undergraduate and graduate education programs through the master's degree. The regional universities are specifically authorized by law to grant any degree through the master's degree to any student who has completed a program of study in an area determined by the faculty and the institution's board of trustees to be appropriate for granting a degree.

In 2011, legislation was enacted authorizing Eastern Washington University (EWU) to offer an educational specialist degree (Ed.S.). An Ed.S. is an advanced degree for people who already have a master's degree with a teaching or educational focus. It is an intermediate degree between a master's and a doctorate. Some common Ed.S. specialties include school psychology, curriculum and instruction, special education, and educational administration.

Currently, EWU is the only regional university that has been authorized to offer a graduate degree above a master's.

**Summary of Bill:** The bill as referred to committee not considered.

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*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.*

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments):** The boards of trustees of Central Washington University (CWU), Western Washington University (WWU), and The Evergreen State College (TESC) are authorized to offer Ed.S. degrees.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments):** Added the board of trustees of TESC.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Committee/Commission/Task Force Created:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This is an important bill to educators looking for the ability to specialize in this area. The Ed.S. degree ensures national competitiveness and equity for students that are keeping up with academic quality. We appreciated the addition of TESC, which will help meet market demands.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Julie Garver, TESC; Sherry Burkey, WWU; Steve DuPont, CWU.