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**SENATE BILL 6263**

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**State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Ranker, Palumbo, Darneille, Keiser, Liias, Frockt, Kuderer, Hasegawa, and Conway

AN ACT Relating to expanding the passport to college promise program to include youth experiencing homelessness and foster youth thirteen and older; and amending RCW 28B.117.010, 28B.117.030, and 28B.117.040.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.117.010 and 2012 c 163 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

The passport to college promise program is created. The purpose of the program is:

(1) To encourage current and former foster care youth and youth experiencing homelessness to prepare for, attend, and successfully complete higher education;

(2) To improve the high school graduation outcomes of foster youth through coordinated P-20 and child welfare outreach, intervention, and planning; and

(3) To improve postsecondary outcomes by providing current and former foster care youth and youth experiencing homelessness with the educational planning, information, institutional support, and direct financial resources necessary for them to succeed in higher education.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.117.030 and 2013 c 182 s 8 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The office shall design and, to the extent funds are appropriated for this purpose, implement, a program of supplemental scholarship and student assistance for students who have emancipated from the state, tribal, or federal foster care systems and from the jurisdiction of the interstate compact on the placement of children after having spent at least one ((~~year~~)) day in care and youth who have experienced homelessness for at least one day.

(2) The office shall convene and consult with an advisory committee to assist with program design and implementation. The committee shall include but not be limited to former foster care and homeless youth and their advocates; representatives from the state board for community and technical colleges, and from public and private agencies that assist current and former foster care recipients and youth experiencing homelessness in their transition to adulthood; and student support specialists from public and private colleges and universities.

(3) To the extent that sufficient funds have been appropriated for this purpose, a student is eligible for assistance under this section if he or she:

(a) Spent at least one ((~~year~~)) day in foster care subsequent to his or her ((~~sixteenth~~)) thirteenth birthday;

(b) Meets one of the following three requirements:

(i) Emancipated from foster care on or after January 1, 2007;

(ii) Enrolls in extended foster care; or

(iii) Achieves a permanent plan after age seventeen and one-half years;

(c) Is a resident student, as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2);

(d) Is enrolled with or will enroll on at least a half‑time basis with an institution of higher education in Washington state by the age of twenty‑one;

(e) Is making satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of a degree or certificate program, if receiving supplemental scholarship assistance;

(f) Has not earned a bachelor's or professional degree; and

(g) Is not pursuing a degree in theology.

(4) To the extent that sufficient funds have been appropriated for this purpose, a student is eligible for assistance under this section if the student:

(a) Spent at least one day experiencing homelessness subsequent to the student's thirteenth birthday; and

(b) Meets all the requirements in subsection (3)(c) through (g) of this section.

(5) A passport to college scholarship under this section:

(a) Shall not exceed resident undergraduate tuition and fees at the highest‑priced public institution of higher education in the state; and

(b) Shall not exceed the student's financial need, less a reasonable self‑help amount defined by the office, when combined with all other public and private grant, scholarship, and waiver assistance the student receives.

((~~(5)~~)) (6) An eligible student may receive a passport to college scholarship under this section for a maximum of five years after the student first enrolls with an institution of higher education or until the student turns age twenty‑six, whichever occurs first. If a student turns age twenty‑six during an academic year, and would otherwise be eligible for a scholarship under this section, the student shall continue to be eligible for a scholarship for the remainder of the academic year.

((~~(6)~~)) (7) The office, in consultation with and with assistance from the state board for community and technical colleges, shall perform an annual analysis to verify that those institutions of higher education at which students have received a scholarship under this section have awarded the student all available need‑based and merit‑based grant and scholarship aid for which the student qualifies.

((~~(7)~~)) (8) In designing and implementing the passport to college student support program under this section, the office, in consultation with and with assistance from the state board for community and technical colleges, shall ensure that a participating college or university:

(a) Has a viable plan for identifying students eligible for assistance under this section, for tracking and enhancing their academic progress, for addressing their unique needs for assistance during school vacations and academic interims, and for linking them to appropriate sources of assistance in their transition to adulthood;

(b) Receives financial and other incentives for achieving measurable progress in the recruitment, retention, and graduation of eligible students.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.117.040 and 2012 c 163 s 4 are each amended to read as follows:

Effective operation of the passport to college promise program requires early and accurate identification of former foster care youth and youth experiencing homelessness so that they can be linked to the financial and other assistance that will help them succeed in college. To that end:

(1) All institutions of higher education that receive funding for student support services under RCW 28B.117.030 shall include on their applications for admission or on their registration materials a question asking whether the applicant has been in foster care in Washington state for at least one ((~~year~~)) day or experienced homelessness for at least one day since his or her ((~~sixteenth~~)) thirteenth birthday together with an explanation that financial and support services may be available. All other institutions of higher education are strongly encouraged to include such a question and explanation. No institution may consider whether an applicant may be eligible for a scholarship or student support services under this chapter when deciding whether the applicant will be granted admission.

(2) The department of social and health services shall devise and implement procedures for efficiently, promptly, and accurately identifying students and applicants who are eligible for services under RCW 28B.117.030, and for sharing that information with the office and with institutions of higher education. The procedures shall include appropriate safeguards for consent by the applicant or student before disclosure.

(3) The office of homeless youth shall devise and implement procedures for efficiently, promptly, and accurately identifying students and applicants who are eligible for services under RCW 28B.117.030, and for sharing that information with the office and with institutions of higher education. The procedures shall include appropriate safeguards for consent by the applicant or student before disclosure.

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