

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SSB 6127

As Reported by House Committee On:
College & Workforce Development

Title: An act relating to membership of the student achievement council.

Brief Description: Adding a graduate student to the student achievement council.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Randall, Conway, Hunt, Stanford, Saldaña and Wilson, C.).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

College & Workforce Development: 2/25/20, 2/26/20 [DP].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Adds a graduate student to the membership of the Washington Student Achievement Council.
- Increases the student member terms from one year to two years, and requires that they be staggered.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COLLEGE & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Entenman, Vice Chair; Leavitt, Vice Chair; Gildon, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Mead, Paul, Pollet, Ramos, Rude, Sells, Slatter and Sutherland.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 3 members: Representatives Van Werven, Ranking Minority Member; Kraft and Young.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Graham, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

Background:

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.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) is a state agency consisting of nine voting members. The WSAC provides strategic planning, oversight, advocacy, and program administration to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment. The members are comprised as follows:

- five citizen members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, including one student citizen member;
- a representative of an independent nonprofit higher education institution, selected by an association of independent nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions;
- a representative of the four-year institutions of higher education, selected by the presidents of those institutions;
- a representative of the state's community and technical college system, selected by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; and
- a representative of the state's kindergarten through grade 12 education system, selected by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in consultation with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and the State Board of Education.

The citizen members are selected based on their knowledge of or experience in higher education, and serve four-year terms, except for the student member, who serves for one year. The terms of the initial members must be staggered.

Summary of Bill:

The WSAC's membership is increased from nine members to 10 members, and there must be both an undergraduate and graduate student member. The student terms are for two years instead of one, and the student terms must be staggered.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The WSAC is essential, and it is important to ensure that students have a voice. There is already a student member, but often by default it is an undergraduate student. Graduate students have specific insight to offer, and this bill makes sure that as higher education issues and concerns are considered, both graduate and undergraduate students are represented. The average age of a graduate student is 33, but many are over 40 and coming back to school after having careers. Debt burden is also different and much larger for graduate students. The terms are staggered to ensure that student voices are not lost all at once.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Randall, prime sponsor; Matthew Sutherland, Graduate and Professional Student Association, Washington State University; and Maggie Dunham Jordhal, Graduate and Professional Student Senate, University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.