
Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

HB 1821

Brief Description: Creating a postsecondary credential transparency work group.

Sponsors: Representatives Slatter, Timmons and Pollet.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a credential transparency Work Group.

Hearing Date: 2/15/23

Staff: Saranda Ross (786-7068)

Background:

The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) created and manages Washington Career Bridge (Career Bridge), a website that features over 6,500 Washington education programs such as short-term training to one-year certificates, apprenticeships, two-year associate degrees, and bachelor's degrees. Career Bridge shows the cost, length, program description, and contact person for each program. Additional data includes how many students completed a program, whether students secured employment, how much students earn, and what industry students work in. Career Bridge also details what employment sectors are growing, salaries in employment sectors, and forecasted openings.

The Workforce Board also created the Credential Transparency Advisory Committee (Committee) to explore the role that credentialing plays in the educational and economic mobility of Washingtonians, and talent development for the state's businesses. The Committee consists of representatives from Washington's public and private higher education institutions, registered apprenticeship, kindergarten through grade 12 education, the workforce development

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system, and policymakers.

In 2021, the Committee issued a final report that includes recommendations to advance Washington's efforts toward a credential transparency framework that, among other features, is learner-centered, can be reliably evaluated, and provides momentum, mobility, and permeability along education and career pathways.

Summary of Bill:

Work Group. A credential transparency Work Group (Work Group) is created. The Work Group is staffed by, and housed within, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. Representatives from multiple governmental organizations and postsecondary education agencies and institutions are required to participate.

The purpose of the Work Group is to:

- a. increase postsecondary credential transparency;
- b. identify and disseminate information on credentials;
- c. review existing state credential platforms, data, and projects; and
- d. identify best practices to increase credential transparency.

The duties of the Work Group include:

- a. providing recommendations to a state credential transparency platform;
- b. developing a shared definition of credential and common credential terminology;
- c. recommending needed changes to state credential platforms;
- d. developing a proposal to establish kindergarten through grade 12 credential recommendations; and
- e. developing a statewide communications plan to increase credential awareness.

The Work Group is authorized to contract with a state credential transparency platform.

Demonstration Projects. The Work Group is required to identify up to four workforce industry sectors that have statewide reach. Each industry sector must select a network of partners to conduct Demonstration Projects on two statewide occupations within the respective industry sector. Each Demonstration Project must:

- a. identify diverse approaches to obtaining credentials across a range of providers within the chosen occupations;
- b. chart the skills, behaviors, abilities, and knowledge required for occupational pathways within the chosen occupations; and
- c. collect credential data within the chosen occupations, defined and determined by the Work Group using the common descriptive language.

The four industry sectors must report to the Work Group the preliminary results of the data collected from the demonstration projects by June 1, 2024, and final results by July 1, 2025. The Work Group is required, to the extent possible, to incorporate the data from the demonstration

projects into web-based tools and services to allow users to understand, evaluate, and make decisions about credentials and maximize their most equitable outcome.

The recommendations and developments created by the Work Group in conducting its duties and carrying out its purpose must be reported to the Legislature by September 30, 2024. Similarly, the findings and recommendations from the Demonstration Projects must be reported to the legislature by September 30, 2025, and each year thereafter.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 10, 2023.

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