
HOUSE BILL 2800

State of Washington

53rd Legislature

1994 Regular Session

By Representatives Finkbeiner, Jacobsen, Brumsickle, Rayburn, Ogden, J. Kohl and Cothorn

Read first time 01/24/94. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the provision of information about postsecondary
2 education; adding new sections to chapter 28B.80 RCW; and creating new
3 sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Education beyond high school benefits both the individual
7 recipient and society in general. Those with postsecondary education
8 not only have a greater likelihood of prospering individually, but of
9 contributing to the state's economy since they are more likely to
10 remain employed, to rely less on state-subsidized welfare or health
11 services, and to generate state revenue through sales or property
12 taxes. They also are more able to adapt to changing job requirements.

13 (2) Many individuals, particularly those from low-income or
14 disadvantaged backgrounds, do not have access to information about the
15 value and need for postsecondary education; the steps involved in
16 preparing for college; the location of postsecondary education or
17 training programs of interest; or the availability of financial
18 assistance for those who need it. Many do not have support systems
19 that encourage their participation. Information and personal advising

1 are especially needed by many low-income and disadvantaged middle and
2 high school students, out-of-school youth, and adults in need of
3 training or retraining who do not now have access to such information
4 and personal assistance.

5 (3) High school counselors, who have served as the traditional
6 source of information about postsecondary education for their students,
7 are finding it increasingly difficult to dedicate the amount of time
8 needed for college advising, due to the high student-to-counselor
9 ratio, which is five hundred thirty-five on average, state-wide, and
10 due to the increasingly difficult social issues with which they must
11 deal.

12 (4) Although many agencies and community and social service
13 organizations provide information about career planning and, to some
14 extent postsecondary education opportunities, they are limited in scope
15 and in the number of individuals they can serve. These information
16 providers need access to current information about the availability of
17 postsecondary programs and student financial aid.

18 (5) In spite of existing efforts of high school counselors and
19 other information providers, there remain populations that do not have
20 access to information about educational options or assistance in
21 planning and in applying for admission and for financial aid. These
22 populations include high school students, out-of-school youth, and
23 adults in need of training or retraining. Without such information and
24 assistance, these individuals do not know how or where to begin and
25 often do not, at great cost to themselves and to society in general.

26 (6) The need of information about postsecondary education options
27 exists throughout the population and in all areas of the state.
28 However, it appears to be most acute in the highly populated King
29 county and throughout southwestern and south central Washington,
30 including Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Lewis, Skamania, Klickitat,
31 Yakima, Douglas, Grant, and Adams counties.

32 (7) There is a need for a comprehensive postsecondary education
33 resource and information center, where Washington residents can access
34 available materials and receive individual counseling on career
35 options, postsecondary programs, entrance requirements, and information
36 regarding student financial aid.

37 (8) There is also a need for a resource center to serve as a source
38 of information for guidance counselors, community-based organizations,
39 educational institutions, and other information providers.

1 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The postsecondary education resource
2 center is created. The purpose of the center is to provide
3 comprehensive postsecondary educational information and counseling
4 services for high school students, out-of-school youth, adults, and
5 parents. An additional purpose of the center is to serve as a resource
6 for schools and other nonprofit organizations seeking to provide
7 information about postsecondary education. Services of the center will
8 be available to all individuals, but will be targeted primarily to low-
9 income or disadvantaged populations.

10 (2) The postsecondary education resource center shall:

11 (a) Serve as a repository and clearinghouse for information on
12 postsecondary education opportunities;

13 (b) Employ staff with expertise in career, academic, and financial
14 aid planning to provide counseling in any of these subjects;

15 (c) Take actions to increase public awareness of the importance of
16 postsecondary education, including developing and distributing
17 postsecondary education awareness information;

18 (d) Provide information to high school counselors and other in-
19 state organizations that provide information on postsecondary education
20 opportunities;

21 (e) Coordinate with other local service providers to ensure that
22 services offered by the center will not duplicate other existing
23 services, but will increase the availability of information to those
24 who seek it;

25 (f) Build and strengthen relationships with organizations locally,
26 state-wide, and nationally to share resources and provide better
27 service;

28 (g) Provide consultative services to communities seeking to
29 establish similar programs at other sites throughout the state;

30 (h) Perform other functions consistent with the purpose of the
31 center as prescribed in subsection (1) of this section.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The center shall be located in King county,
33 with an auxiliary site established in Yakima county. The center and
34 its auxiliary site shall be established in a central, neutral, and
35 accessible location and will be open to all who seek information on
36 postsecondary education opportunities, including adult workers, middle
37 and secondary school students, their parents, and out-of-school youth.

1 Outreach to individuals living in other high-need areas shall be
2 coordinated from these locations.

3 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** Working in collaboration with the public
4 schools, colleges, state-wide higher education organizations, and
5 community service groups, the center shall also function as a resource
6 for guidance counselors, community agency staff, educational
7 institutions, and other nonprofit information providers. By design,
8 the center shall augment, rather than duplicate, the work of other
9 information providers.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** The center shall have an advisory board
11 representing high school counselors, financial aid administrators,
12 college admissions officers, business, community organizations, and
13 organizations providing postsecondary information services to state
14 residents.

15 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The center shall function under the
16 direction of the higher education coordinating board. The location,
17 staffing, and management of the center shall be determined by the
18 higher education coordinating board, after consultation with the
19 advisory board authorized in section 5 of this act.

20 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The board shall seek funds available from
21 the federal government to help support such outreach efforts and the
22 board may accept resources and funding from private and public sources
23 to support the center.

24 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** The board shall evaluate the effect of
25 services on assisted populations and report findings to the governor
26 and fiscal and higher education committees of the legislature by
27 December 1998.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** Sections 2 through 8 of this act are each
29 added to chapter 28B.80 RCW.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** If specific funding for the purposes of
31 this act, referencing this act by bill number, is not provided by June

1 30, 1994, in the omnibus appropriations act, this act shall be null and
2 void.

--- END ---