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**SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 1982**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** House Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Pollet, Walkinshaw, Gregerson, Carlyle, Tarleton, and Orwall)

AN ACT Relating to enhancing student completion through advising, mentoring, recapture initiatives, remedial programs, and accelerated precollege instruction and creating the innovations for student completion program; and adding new sections to chapter 28B.10 RCW.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The legislature finds that advising, mentoring, learning skills, effective remedial writing and mathematics, recapture, and service learning programs are essential to increasing the percentages of students who enroll in higher education and who continue to successfully complete degree or certificate programs. These programs also help to improve the academic success of low performing, high-risk students in K-12 and postsecondary education in addition to other benefits. Institutions of higher education in Washington and not-for-profit organizations that partner with the institutions, have developed innovative programs that have proven to be highly successful and cost-effective in each of these program areas. The legislature intends to encourage the adoption of such innovative programs at other institutions of higher education and to encourage additional innovations.

(2) The legislature finds that advising programs at institutions of higher education have been dramatically curtailed as state funding support was reduced during the great recession. This funding reduction harmed the ability of students to successfully complete degree or certificate programs; reduced the ability of students to enroll in courses necessary for timely completion; increased the number of students who incurred debts, but were unable to complete degree or certificate programs; and impacted students' abilities to enroll in programs that they hoped to pursue.

(3) The legislature finds that mentoring programs, including those that use student volunteers, service learning program enrolled students, and partnerships with not-for-profit organizations, are very successful at assisting K-12 students who have no immediate family member who attended college, are English language learners, or are minority and disadvantage youth, to apply and enroll, obtain financial aid, and remain enrolled through completion of a degree or certificate program. The legislature intends that each institution of higher education will have appropriate mentoring and service learning programs, in conjunction with increased advising, to improve recruitment, enrollment, use of financial aid, and successful completion of degrees or certificates. The legislature intends to increase mentoring and service learning opportunities for K-12 and postsecondary education students, especially those who are at risk of not completing their programs of study.

(4) Among the successful innovative advising programs pioneered at Washington institutions of higher education are programs referred to as recapture. These programs use an advisor to contact students who have completed a substantial portion of the requirements for a degree or certificate program, but who dropped out and did not complete their degree or certificate at another institution. The institution the student dropped out of helps facilitate reenrollment and program completion. Recapture programs are proven to be extremely cost-effective while changing students' lives. A student who does not complete his or her degree or certificate has incurred debt and lost years without gaining the proven economic opportunity that comes from attaining a degree or certificate. These programs assist students by removing barriers to completing a degree or certificate. The legislature intends that each institution of higher education should have a program to recapture students. The legislature also intends that each institution provide comprehensive advising services, which include connecting students with needed resources, such as child care, to keep students enrolled and on course to complete degrees and certificates.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Western Washington University shall host a statewide consortium of public and private institutions of higher education with the purpose of providing and increasing the number of campus-based mentoring and service learning opportunities in K-12 education and at eligible institutions as defined in RCW 28B.12.030. The consortium shall develop and administer a state campus compact between eligible institutions, and shall partner with nonprofit organizations that provide mentoring services.

(2) The mentoring and service learning opportunities developed under the state campus compact are intended to serve the following target populations of students:

(a) For K-12 students, those who are at risk of dropping out of school, not on track to complete their high school diploma on time, from a low-income family, in or transitioning from foster care, or from a family with no previous experience in attending college; and

(b) For postsecondary education students, those who are not on track to complete their degree or certificate on time, enrolled in one or more precollege level courses or programs, from a low-income family, in or transitioning from foster care, from a family with no previous experience in attending college, or veterans of the armed services.

(3) The mentoring and service learning opportunities of the state campus compact shall be designed to:

(a) Increase student engagement in learning and postsecondary education;

(b) Develop workforce, financial literacy, and citizenship skills;

(c) Improve student attitudes and behaviors; and

(d) Improve academic success and retention.

(4) The state campus compact shall address:

(a) Training and outreach to postsecondary students to serve as mentors and increase the number and retention of participating mentors;

(b) Coordination of service learning projects;

(c) Training for successful partnerships between institutions and schools;

(d) Financial literacy training for mentors and mentees;

(e) Methods to improve the accountability of institutional programs by compiling statewide data to measure the impact of mentoring programs and implementing statewide assessment tools by measuring:

(i) Academic improvement;

(ii) Retention and completion rates;

(iii) Access to institutions of higher education; and

(iv) Development of workforce and citizenship skills, attitudes, and behaviors;

(f) Increased tutoring support for developmental education students taking online mathematics courses; and

(g) Dissemination of best practices and impacts of mentoring programs statewide.

(5) Community and technical colleges are authorized to make space available to mentoring organizations, funded by public or private sources, that have staff members who provide a continuity of advising and mentoring for students. This advising and mentoring may include encouraging and assisting high school students or adults to apply to college, to apply for financial aid, and provide initial orientation to campus and registration, with the provision of ongoing advising if done in collaboration with the college's advising staff.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The innovations for student completion program is established. The purpose of the program is to determine whether student support services, such as advising, mentoring, recapture, and accelerated precollege instruction, boost student retention, completion rates, and the number of degrees and certificates awarded at institutions of higher education.

(2) The state board for community and technical colleges shall administer the program for the state's community and technical colleges. Each community and technical college shall have an innovations for student completion program with the following features:

(a) A proactive advising and mentoring system that is custom designed to meet the needs of each college, but includes at a minimum:

(i) Academic advisors assigned to students with required meetings as necessary for each student;

(ii) A new student orientation or student success course, which may be an intensive course before, or at the start of a student's first quarter, or a quarter-long course, that provides students enrolling in a degree or certificate program with information related to student success, such as study skills, time management, financial aid, remedial academic skill resources, financial and employment counseling resources, and degree or certificate navigation information;

(iii) Degree or certificate mapping and career counseling; and

(iv) An early alert component, to the extent funding is available for the infrastructure or software, that connects both professional and academic advisors with data, such as attendance, grades, and other indicators of academic progress. The data should be used as a signal to identify a student at risk of not completing a degree or certificate so an advisor can intervene and contact the student. The advisor shall provide information regarding resources that may assist the student to remain enrolled and succeed in obtaining his or her degree or certificate;

(b) A recapture program that contacts and helps students who completed a substantial portion of their program's requirements, but dropped out before graduating and did not complete their degree or certificate at another institution, to reenter their program. The community or technical college may determine priorities among former students for this outreach and counseling effort. The community or technical college shall provide counseling, access to higher education system and community resources, assistance in accessing financial aid or work study programs, and shall take innovative steps to eliminate barriers for these students to help them reenroll in the community or technical college and successfully complete a degree or certificate;

(c) A mentoring program that partners underrepresented, low-income students from the area middle and high schools with student mentors from a community or technical college. In order to become a community or technical college student mentor, the student must take a course in mentorship to be offered by the college for academic credit.

(3) The state board for community and technical colleges shall, subject to appropriations provided for this purpose, administer a competitive grant program for the community and technical colleges that want to pursue innovative advising, mentoring, and service learning programs. A community or technical college may engage in more targeted or intensive student support service programs that focus on elements of advising, mentoring, recapture, and learning skills that go above and beyond the required elements of the innovations for student completion program. Colleges may propose innovative programs, or the adoption of programs pioneered at other campuses, by submitting an application to the state board for community and technical colleges to be considered for a competitive grant.

(4) The state board for community and technical colleges shall, subject to appropriations provided for this purpose, administer an innovative grant program for community or technical colleges to expand their integrated basic education and skills training program to adult basic education and English as a second language students. A community or technical college interested in expanding its integrated basic education and skills training program may submit an application to the state board for community and technical colleges, which shall select candidates based on the number of applications and available funding.

(5)(a) The baccalaureate institutions of higher education shall each administer an innovations for student completion program on their campuses, subject to appropriations provided for this purpose, that has the following elements:

(i) A proactive advising and mentoring system that is custom designed to meet the needs of each college, but includes at a minimum:

(A) Academic advisors assigned to students with required meetings as necessary for each student;

(B) A new student orientation or student success course that provides information related to student success, such as study skills, time management, financial aid, remedial academic skill resources, financial and employment counseling resources, and degree navigation information, for individual students who would benefit from such programs as determined by the institution;

(C) Degree mapping and career counseling; and

(D) An early alert component, subject to appropriations provided for this purpose, that uses infrastructure or software to connect advisors with data, such as attendance, grades, and other indicators of academic progress that can be used as a signal to then intervene and connect with a student at risk of not completing;

(ii) A recapture program that contacts and helps students who completed a substantial portion of their program's requirements, but dropped out before graduating and did not complete their degree or certificate at another institution, to reenter their program. The baccalaureate institution of higher education may determine priorities among former students for this outreach and counseling effort. The baccalaureate institution of higher education shall provide counseling, access to higher education system and community resources, assistance in accessing financial aid or work study programs, and shall take innovative steps to eliminate barriers for these students to help them reenroll in the institution of higher education and successfully complete a degree or certificate;

(iii) A mentoring program that partners underrepresented, low-income students from the area middle and high schools with student mentors from the baccalaureate institutions of higher education, which may be designed and operated in conjunction with the state campus compact under section 2 of this act. In order to become a student mentor, the student must take a course in mentorship to be offered by the baccalaureate institution of higher education for academic credit.

(b) The student achievement council shall, subject to appropriations provided for this purpose, administer a competitive grant program for the baccalaureate institutions of higher education that want to pursue innovative advising, mentoring, and service learning programs. These institutions may engage in targeted or more intensive student support service programs that focus on elements of advising, mentoring, recapture, and learning skills that go above and beyond the required elements of the innovations for student completion program. These targeted or more intensive advising and mentoring programs may include a focus on a group of students, such as transfer students, underserved or first generation students, students with disabilities, or veterans, or a specific program element, such as career pathways or expanded tutoring options. Eligible programs may include partnerships with nonprofit organizations that train and supervise service learning students. Priority shall be given to those working with communities or tribes whose participation in higher education is underrepresented. If the baccalaureate institutions of higher education decide to pursue a more innovative student support program, they may submit an application to the student achievement council to be considered for a competitive grant.

(6) An attendance pilot project shall be established at a community or technical college to be selected by the state board for community and technical colleges, which shall be in addition to the innovations for student completion program. The project shall require the advisors of students who miss a number of classes without an excused absence, which number shall be determined by the pilot project college, to reach out to the students to determine why the students have not been attending. The advisor shall provide guidance and if need be, help the student find appropriate resources to assist the student in successfully continuing his or her degree or certificate program.

(7)(a) The state board for community and technical colleges and the baccalaureate institutions of higher education, in consultation with the student achievement council, shall conduct a rigorous evaluation of the innovations for student completion program and attendance pilot project after two years and four years of the programs' inception. The evaluation shall include an assessment of whether practices at some institutions are more successful than others and whether those practices should be replicated by other institutions.

(b) The evaluation results shall be submitted to the higher education committees of the legislature by November 1, 2018, and by November 1, 2020, in a report that includes recommendations for the program. Outcomes measured in the report shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) Retention and completion rates, including time to completion;

(ii) Number of degrees and certificates awarded;

(iii) Data regarding credits, such as the average number of credits successfully completed, credits retaken due to failing grades, and excess credits taken but not required to graduate;

(iv) Grade point averages; and

(v) Attendance rates.

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