

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5619

As of February 16, 2015

Title: An act relating to basic education for adults at community and technical colleges.

Brief Description: Concerning basic education for adults at community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: Senators Bailey, Kohl-Welles, Frockt and McAuliffe; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/12/15.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: Washington State community and technical colleges must offer comprehensive educational, training, and service programs designed to meet the needs of the communities and students served. This includes adult basic skills literacy education. Under current law, adult basic education is defined as instruction designed to achieve mastery of skills in reading, writing, oral communication, and computation at a level sufficient to allow the individual to function effectively as a parent, worker, and citizen in the United States, commensurate with that individual's actual ability level, and includes English as a second language and preparation and testing services for a high school equivalency certificate.

According to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), in the 2013-14 academic year 19,510 full time equivalent (FTE) students were enrolled in basic skills courses within the community and technical college (CTC) system. In addition 2,034 FTEs were in enrolled in the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training program known as I-BEST.

Summary of Bill: The Legislature intends to provide a regular, dependable source of funding to provide basic education for adults (BEA) by providing funding for each FTE student enrolled at a CTC.

State appropriations to SBCTC must include a separate appropriation to provide BEA. The appropriation is determined by multiplying the total FTE enrollment in BEA courses by the

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statewide average allocation per high school FTE. The allocation per high school FTE is multiplied by the following factors each academic year until 2020:

- 2015-16: factor of 0.5;
- 2016-17: factor of 0.6;
- 2017-18: factor of 0.7;
- 2018-19: factor of 0.8;
- 2019-20: factor of 0.9; and
- 2020-21 and thereafter: factor of 1.

The Caseload Forecast Council must estimate the anticipated number of FTE students who will enroll in BEA courses in CTCs.

SBCTC must submit a budget request each year to adjust the appropriation to ensure full funding for the actual number of FTE students who enroll in BEA courses in CTCs.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Stable caseload funding would allow us to expand capacity and greatly increase student access and completion of high school diplomas. Over the next 20 years there will not be enough high school graduates to meet the higher education needs of the state's workforce. Washington will need to fill this gap with working-age adults. New federal law requires colleges to get students college ready rather than just up to a tenth-grade level. Funding for BEA students on average is \$3,000 per student, and in the K–12 system, the rate is over \$6,000 per student. CTCs offer the same education as the K–12 system. All colleges offer BEA courses. The BEA courses are taught to a college level so that students can transfer into college seamlessly. Without BEA, people wouldn't be able to get off other state programs. BEA gives people a sense of pride and dignity.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Jon Kerr, Nick Lutes, SBCTC; Lori Griffin, Pierce College; Merrill Williams, citizen.