
HOUSE BILL 1214

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2017 Regular Session

By Representatives Hargrove, Pettigrew, Sells, Haler, and Muri

Read first time 01/13/17. Referred to Committee on Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to increasing the number of state need grant
2 recipients by awarding the community and technical college rate in
3 certain financial aid programs for a student's first two years of
4 postsecondary credit; amending RCW 28B.92.020, 28B.92.060, and
5 28B.118.010; and creating a new section.

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

7 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that more than
8 twenty-four thousand students were eligible for the state need grant
9 in academic year 2015-16, but did not receive an award. In addition,
10 the burden of student loan debt continues to have a significant
11 impact on middle-income families. By restructuring the state need
12 grant and college bound scholarship programs as they are currently
13 funded the state need grant program could serve more students.

14 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.020 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 11 s 158 are each
15 amended to read as follows:

16 (1) The legislature finds that the higher education
17 community((~~r~~)) has completed a review of the state need grant
18 program. It is the intent of the legislature to endorse the proposed
19 changes to the state need grant program, including:

1 (a) Reaffirmation that the primary purpose of the state need
2 grant program is to assist low-income, needy, and disadvantaged
3 Washington residents attending institutions of higher education;

4 (b) A goal that the base state need grant amount over time be
5 increased to be equivalent to the rate of tuition charged to resident
6 undergraduate students attending Washington state public colleges and
7 universities;

8 (c) State need grant recipients be required to contribute a
9 portion of the total cost of their education through self-help;

10 (d) State need grant recipients be required to document their
11 need for dependent care assistance after taking into account other
12 public funds provided for like purposes; and

13 (e) Institutional aid administrators be allowed to determine
14 whether a student eligible for a state need grant in a given academic
15 year may remain eligible for the ensuing year if the student's family
16 income increases by no more than a marginal amount except for funds
17 provided through the educational assistance grant program for
18 students with dependents.

19 (2) The legislature further finds that the changes in subsection
20 (1) of this section((7)) should ((~~do so~~)) occur in a timely manner.

21 (3) The legislature also finds that:

22 (a) In most circumstances, need grant eligibility should not
23 extend beyond five years or one hundred twenty-five percent of the
24 published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or
25 the credit or clock-hour equivalent; ((and))

26 (b) State financial aid programs should continue to adhere to the
27 principle that funding follows resident students to their choice of
28 institution of higher education; and

29 (c) Students who are eligible to receive state need grants and
30 college bound scholarships are encouraged to complete their first two
31 years of postsecondary education at a community or technical college
32 before using state aid to enroll in a four-year institution of higher
33 education.

34 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28B.92.060 and 2012 c 229 s 558 are each amended to
35 read as follows:

36 In awarding need grants, the office shall proceed substantially
37 as follows: PROVIDED, That nothing contained herein shall be
38 construed to prevent the office, in the exercise of its sound

1 discretion, from following another procedure when the best interest
2 of the program so dictates:

3 (1) The office shall annually select the financial aid award
4 recipients from among Washington residents applying for student
5 financial aid who have been ranked according to:

6 (a) Financial need as determined by the amount of the family
7 contribution; and

8 (b) Other considerations, such as whether the student is a former
9 foster youth, or is a placebound student who has completed an
10 associate of arts or associate of science degree or its equivalent.

11 (2) The financial need of the highest ranked students shall be
12 met by grants depending upon the evaluation of financial need until
13 the total allocation has been disbursed. Funds from grants which are
14 declined, forfeited or otherwise unused shall be reawarded until
15 disbursed, except that eligible former foster youth shall be assured
16 receipt of a grant. The office, in consultation with four-year
17 institutions of higher education, the council, and the state board
18 for community and technical colleges, shall develop award criteria
19 and methods of disbursement based on level of need, and not solely
20 rely on a first-come, first-served basis.

21 (3) A student shall be eligible to receive a state need grant for
22 up to five years, or the credit or clock hour equivalent of five
23 years, or up to one hundred twenty-five percent of the published
24 length of time of the student's program. A student may not start a
25 new associate degree program as a state need grant recipient until at
26 least five years have elapsed since earning an associate degree as a
27 need grant recipient, except that a student may earn two associate
28 degrees concurrently. Qualifications for renewal will include
29 maintaining satisfactory academic progress toward completion of an
30 eligible program as determined by the office. Should the recipient
31 terminate his or her enrollment for any reason during the academic
32 year, the unused portion of the grant shall be returned to the state
33 educational grant fund by the institution according to the
34 institution's own policy for issuing refunds, except as provided in
35 RCW 28B.92.070.

36 (4) In computing financial need, the office shall determine a
37 maximum student expense budget allowance, not to exceed an amount
38 equal to the total maximum student expense budget at the public
39 institutions plus the current average state appropriation per student
40 for operating expense in the public institutions. Any child support

1 payments received by students who are parents attending less than
2 half-time shall not be used in computing financial need.

3 (5) Beginning with the fall 2017 disbursements, a student
4 enrolled in an institution of higher education who has never received
5 a state need grant award and who has fewer than ninety quarter credit
6 hours or sixty semester credit hours must receive a grant award
7 amount no greater than that used for the community or technical
8 college sector.

9 (6)(a) A student who is enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
10 quarter credits, or the equivalent semester credits, may receive a
11 grant for up to one academic year before beginning a program that
12 leads to a degree or certificate.

13 (b) An eligible student enrolled on a less-than-full-time basis
14 shall receive a prorated portion of his or her state need grant for
15 any academic period in which he or she is enrolled on a less-than-
16 full-time basis, as long as funds are available.

17 (c) An institution of higher education may award a state need
18 grant to an eligible student enrolled in three to six credit-bearing
19 quarter credits, or the semester equivalent, on a provisional basis
20 if:

21 (i) The student has not previously received a state need grant
22 from that institution;

23 (ii) The student completes the required free application for
24 federal student aid;

25 (iii) The institution has reviewed the student's financial
26 condition, and the financial condition of the student's family if the
27 student is a dependent student, and has determined that the student
28 is likely eligible for a state need grant; and

29 (iv) The student has signed a document attesting to the fact that
30 the financial information provided on the free application for
31 federal student aid and any additional financial information provided
32 directly to the institution is accurate and complete, and that the
33 student agrees to repay the institution for the grant amount if the
34 student submitted false or incomplete information.

35 ~~((+6))~~ (7) As used in this section, "former foster youth" means
36 a person who is at least eighteen years of age, but not more than
37 twenty-four years of age, who was a dependent of the department of
38 social and health services at the time he or she attained the age of
39 eighteen.

1 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28B.118.010 and 2015 3rd sp.s. c 36 s 8 are each
2 amended to read as follows:

3 The office of student financial assistance shall design the
4 Washington college bound scholarship program in accordance with this
5 section and in alignment with the state need grant program in chapter
6 28B.92 RCW unless otherwise provided in this section.

7 (1) "Eligible students" are those students who:

8 (a) Qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. If a student
9 qualifies in the seventh grade, the student remains eligible even if
10 the student does not receive free or reduced-price lunches
11 thereafter; or

12 (b) Are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW and:

13 (i) In grade seven through twelve; or

14 (ii) Are between the ages of eighteen and twenty-one and have not
15 graduated from high school.

16 (2) Eligible students shall be notified of their eligibility for
17 the Washington college bound scholarship program beginning in their
18 seventh grade year. Students shall also be notified of the
19 requirements for award of the scholarship.

20 (3)(a) To be eligible for a Washington college bound scholarship,
21 a student eligible under subsection (1)(a) of this section must sign
22 a pledge during seventh or eighth grade that includes a commitment to
23 graduate from high school with at least a C average and with no
24 felony convictions. The pledge must be witnessed by a parent or
25 guardian and forwarded to the office of student financial assistance
26 by mail or electronically, as indicated on the pledge form.

27 (b) A student eligible under subsection (1)(b) of this section
28 shall be automatically enrolled, with no action necessary by the
29 student or the student's family, and the enrollment form must be
30 forwarded by the department of social and health services to the
31 (~~higher education coordinating board or its successor~~) office of
32 student financial assistance by mail or electronically, as indicated
33 on the form.

34 (4)(a) Scholarships shall be awarded to eligible students
35 graduating from public high schools, approved private high schools
36 under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or who received home-based instruction
37 under chapter 28A.200 RCW.

38 (b)(i) To receive the Washington college bound scholarship, a
39 student must graduate with at least a "C" average from a public high
40 school or an approved private high school under chapter 28A.195 RCW

1 in Washington or have received home-based instruction under chapter
2 28A.200 RCW, must have no felony convictions, and must be a resident
3 student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through (d).

4 (ii) For a student who does not meet the "C" average requirement,
5 and who completes fewer than two quarters in the running start
6 program, under chapter 28A.600 RCW, the student's first quarter of
7 running start course grades must be excluded from the student's
8 overall grade point average for purposes of determining their
9 eligibility to receive the scholarship.

10 (5) A student's family income will be assessed upon graduation
11 before awarding the scholarship.

12 (6) If at graduation from high school the student's family income
13 does not exceed sixty-five percent of the state median family income,
14 scholarship award amounts shall be as provided in this section.

15 (a) Students who enroll in the college bound scholarship program
16 by June 30, 2017, or students who enroll in the college bound
17 scholarship program on or after June 30, 2017, who have completed at
18 least ninety quarter credit hours or sixty semester credit hours, are
19 eligible to receive an award amount as follows:

20 (i) For students attending two or four-year institutions of
21 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, the value of the award
22 shall be ~~((i) the difference between)~~ the student's tuition and
23 required fees~~((τ))~~; less the value of any state-funded grant,
24 scholarship, or waiver assistance the student receives; ~~((+ii))~~ plus
25 five hundred dollars for books and materials.

26 ~~((+b))~~ (ii) For students attending private four-year
27 institutions of higher education in Washington, the award amount
28 shall be the representative average of awards granted to students in
29 public research universities in Washington or the representative
30 average of awards granted to students in public research universities
31 in Washington in the 2014-15 academic year, whichever is greater.

32 ~~((+e))~~ (iii) For students attending private vocational schools
33 in Washington, the award amount shall be the representative average
34 of awards granted to students in public community and technical
35 colleges in Washington or the representative average of awards
36 granted to students in public community and technical colleges in
37 Washington in the 2014-15 academic year, whichever is greater.

38 (b) Students who enroll in the college bound scholarship program
39 on or after June 30, 2017, who have completed fewer than ninety
40 quarter credit hours or sixty semester credit hours are eligible to

1 receive an award amount no greater than the amount provided to
2 students attending public two-year institutions of higher education
3 as described in (a)(i) of this subsection, or the representative
4 average of awards granted to students in public two-year institutions
5 of higher education as described in (a)(i) of this subsection.

6 (7) Recipients may receive no more than four full-time years'
7 worth of scholarship awards.

8 (8) Institutions of higher education shall award the student all
9 need-based and merit-based financial aid for which the student would
10 otherwise qualify. The Washington college bound scholarship is
11 intended to replace unmet need, loans, and, at the student's option,
12 work-study award before any other grants or scholarships are reduced.

13 (9) The first scholarships shall be awarded to students
14 graduating in 2012.

15 (10) The state of Washington retains legal ownership of tuition
16 units awarded as scholarships under this chapter until the tuition
17 units are redeemed. These tuition units shall remain separately held
18 from any tuition units owned under chapter 28B.95 RCW by a Washington
19 college bound scholarship recipient.

20 (11) The scholarship award must be used within five years of
21 receipt. Any unused scholarship tuition units revert to the
22 Washington college bound scholarship account.

23 (12) Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any
24 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the
25 scholarship tuition units shall revert to the Washington college
26 bound scholarship account.

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