
SENATE BILL 6101

State of Washington 65th Legislature 2018 Regular Session

By Senators Ranker, Frockt, Palumbo, Dhingra, Kuderer, McCoy, Cleveland, Saldaña, Billig, Van De Wege, Hunt, and Hasegawa

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1 AN ACT Relating to establishing the evergreen investment
2 scholarship program, which provides for affordable access to
3 institutions of higher education; amending RCW 43.88C.010; and adding
4 a new chapter to Title 28B RCW.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The evergreen investment scholarship
7 program is established to help make four years of college affordable
8 and accessible to all citizens of the state of Washington by offering
9 a tuition waiver for eligible students enrolled in a bachelor's or
10 associate degree or certificate program offered by Washington's
11 institutions of higher education. The purpose of the program is to
12 encourage more Washington residents who have not yet earned a degree
13 to enroll in and successfully complete a degree or certificate that
14 will lead to opportunities for further education and jobs. By making
15 a higher education credential more affordable and accessible,
16 Washington will make more progress towards the legislature's goal of
17 seventy percent of Washington adults having a postsecondary
18 credential by 2023.

19 It is the intent of the legislature to implement the evergreen
20 investment scholarship program in phases, starting with a free
21 thirteenth year. The legislature recognizes that a free thirteenth

1 year and promise programs are proven to significantly increase high
2 school graduation rates by ensuring all high school graduates know
3 they can attend a free year of college or community or technical
4 college regardless of their family incomes. Thus, investment in these
5 programs is an evidence-based means to improve high school graduation
6 rates and to reduce, or even eliminate, opportunity gaps in
7 postsecondary education for students from underrepresented minority
8 groups, low-income students, foster youth, and students with
9 disabilities.

10 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The definitions in this section apply
11 throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires
12 otherwise.

- 13 (1) "Council" means the Washington student achievement council.
14 (2) "Eligible degree or certificate program" means:
15 (a) An associate degree program;
16 (b) Academic programs with credits that can fully transfer via an
17 articulation agreement toward a baccalaureate degree or
18 postbaccalaureate degree at an institution of higher education; or
19 (c) Professional and technical programs that lead to a recognized
20 postsecondary credential.
21 (3) "Gift aid" means financial aid received from the federal Pell
22 grant, the state need grant program under chapter 28B.92 RCW, the
23 college bound scholarship program under chapter 28B.118 RCW, the
24 opportunity grant program under chapter 28B.50 RCW, the opportunity
25 scholarship program under chapter 28B.145 RCW, or any other state
26 grant or scholarship program that provides funds for educational
27 purposes with no obligation of repayment. "Gift aid" does not include
28 student loans and work-study programs.
29 (4) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as in
30 RCW 28B.10.016.
31 (5) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.
32 (6) "Program" means the evergreen investment scholarship program.
33 (7) "Resident student" means a student who is a resident student
34 as defined in RCW 28B.15.012.

35 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** (1) Subject to availability of amounts
36 appropriated for this specific purpose, the office shall administer
37 the program for resident students seeking a bachelor's degree, an

1 associate degree, or certificate from a state institution of higher
2 education under the terms and conditions in this section.

3 (2) To be eligible for the program, a resident student who has
4 not previously earned an associate degree must be enrolled in a state
5 institution of higher education in an eligible degree or certificate
6 program.

7 (3) Students must complete the free application for federal
8 student aid (FAFSA) or the Washington application for state financial
9 aid (WASFA) each academic year in which they seek eligibility for the
10 program.

11 (4) To remain eligible for the program, once a student has earned
12 forty-five credits, the student must maintain a cumulative grade
13 point average of 2.0.

14 (5) For the 2019-20 academic year, eligible students shall
15 receive an award for a free thirteenth year, or three academic
16 quarters, if they have:

17 (a) Graduated high school within the past six calendar months
18 before enrolling in a state institution of higher education; and

19 (b) A family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the
20 state median family income, adjusted for family size.

21 (6) For the 2020-21 academic year, eligible students shall
22 receive an award for six academic quarters if they have:

23 (a) Obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent within the
24 past eighteen calendar months before enrolling in a state institution
25 of higher education; and

26 (b) A family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the
27 state median family income, adjusted for family size.

28 (7) For the 2021-22 academic year, eligible students shall
29 receive an award for nine academic quarters if they have:

30 (a) Obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent within the
31 past thirty calendar months before enrolling in a state institution
32 of higher education; and

33 (b) A family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the
34 state median family income, adjusted for family size.

35 (8) For the 2022-23 academic year, eligible students shall
36 receive an award for twelve academic quarters if they have:

37 (a) Obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent within the
38 past forty-two calendar months before enrolling in a state
39 institution of higher education; and

1 (b) A family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the
2 state median family income, adjusted for family size.

3 (9) For the 2023-24 academic year, eligible students shall
4 receive an award for twelve academic quarters if they have:

5 (a) Obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent; and

6 (b) A family income that does not exceed seventy percent of the
7 state median family income, adjusted for family size.

8 (10) Beginning with the 2024-25 academic year, eligible students
9 shall receive an award for twelve academic quarters if they have:

10 (a) Obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent; and

11 (b) A family income that does not exceed the state median family
12 income, adjusted for family size.

13 (11) The office shall award grants to eligible students for an
14 amount up to the cost of tuition fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020,
15 and services and activities fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.041, less
16 all other gift aid.

17 (12) By December 1, 2020, and annually by December 1st
18 thereafter, the council shall report to the appropriate policy and
19 fiscal committees of the legislature on the following impacts of the
20 program:

21 (a) Student enrollment in the eligible degree or certificate
22 programs;

23 (b) Student completion rates of credits, certificates, and
24 degrees;

25 (c) The cost of implementation, including the cost per student;

26 (d) Additional resources used to meet student needs, such as
27 counseling, precollege courses, child care, or transportation; and

28 (e) The number of students receiving wraparound services, the
29 number of schools providing wraparound services, and the resources
30 needed to provide wraparound services.

31 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The council shall develop a plan to
32 provide all program students who are enrolled at a state institution
33 of higher education with a quarter-long student success course,
34 during or before their first enrollment period, that teaches
35 essential skills for college success.

36 (2) Essential skills may include:

37 (a) Tips for study habits and time management;

38 (b) Financial aid information and resources;

39 (c) Connecting students with advisors;

- 1 (d) Encouraging student mentoring;
- 2 (e) Helping establish student cohorts; and
- 3 (f) Providing information about services available on campus.

4 (3) The plan must address how the council will ensure that
5 students receiving an evergreen investment scholarship program grant
6 are enrolled in such a course during or before their first quarter of
7 eligibility.

8 (4) The council shall provide the plan to the relevant committees
9 of the legislature by December 1, 2019, and begin implementation of
10 the plan for the 2020-21 academic year.

11 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** (1) The Washington state institute for
12 public policy shall conduct a study on the effectiveness of the
13 evergreen investment scholarship program, including but not limited
14 to:

15 (a) Any increase in enrollment in community or technical
16 colleges;

17 (b) Any decreases in enrollment elsewhere in institutions of
18 higher education;

19 (c) Changes in student persistence, completion, and time-to-
20 degree rates in eligible degree or certificate programs;

21 (d) Any change in need or delivery of student services;

22 (e) The fiscal impact of the program on the students,
23 institutions of higher education, and the state.

24 (2) The Washington state institute for public policy shall report
25 its findings to the relevant committees of the legislature by
26 December 1, 2023.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** The caseload forecast council shall
28 estimate the anticipated caseload of the program and submit this
29 forecast as required in RCW 43.88C.020.

30 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** The council may adopt rules to implement
31 this chapter.

32 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 8.** If the legislature does not appropriate
33 enough funding to support the statewide implementation of section 3
34 of this act, the council shall provide grants to state institutions
35 of higher education to implement the program created in this chapter.
36 The institutions of higher education shall partner with local

1 governments and private entities to secure matching funding for the
2 program. The council shall adopt criteria for the grants,
3 prioritizing aid for at-risk students and programs with funding
4 partners.

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** This chapter may be known and cited as the
6 evergreen investment scholarship program.

7 **Sec. 10.** RCW 43.88C.010 and 2015 c 128 s 2 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (1) The caseload forecast council is hereby created. The council
10 shall consist of two individuals appointed by the governor and four
11 individuals, one of whom is appointed by the chairperson of each of
12 the two largest political caucuses in the senate and house of
13 representatives. The chair of the council shall be selected from
14 among the four caucus appointees. The council may select such other
15 officers as the members deem necessary.

16 (2) The council shall employ a caseload forecast supervisor to
17 supervise the preparation of all caseload forecasts. As used in this
18 chapter, "supervisor" means the caseload forecast supervisor.

19 (3) Approval by an affirmative vote of at least five members of
20 the council is required for any decisions regarding employment of the
21 supervisor. Employment of the supervisor shall terminate after each
22 term of three years. At the end of the first year of each three-year
23 term the council shall consider extension of the supervisor's term by
24 one year. The council may fix the compensation of the supervisor. The
25 supervisor shall employ staff sufficient to accomplish the purposes
26 of this section.

27 (4) The caseload forecast council shall oversee the preparation
28 of and approve, by an affirmative vote of at least four members, the
29 official state caseload forecasts prepared under RCW 43.88C.020. If
30 the council is unable to approve a forecast before a date required in
31 RCW 43.88C.020, the supervisor shall submit the forecast without
32 approval and the forecast shall have the same effect as if approved
33 by the council.

34 (5) A councilmember who does not cast an affirmative vote for
35 approval of the official caseload forecast may request, and the
36 supervisor shall provide, an alternative forecast based on
37 assumptions specified by the member.

1 (6) Members of the caseload forecast council shall serve without
2 additional compensation but shall be reimbursed for travel expenses
3 in accordance with RCW 44.04.120 while attending sessions of the
4 council or on official business authorized by the council.
5 Nonlegislative members of the council shall be reimbursed for travel
6 expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

7 (7) "Caseload," as used in this chapter, means:

8 (a) The number of persons expected to meet entitlement
9 requirements and require the services of public assistance programs,
10 state correctional institutions, state correctional noninstitutional
11 supervision, state institutions for juvenile offenders, the common
12 school system, long-term care, medical assistance, foster care, and
13 adoption support;

14 (b) The number of students who are eligible for the Washington
15 college bound scholarship program and are expected to attend an
16 institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.92.030;

17 (c) The number of students who are eligible for the evergreen
18 investment scholarship program and are expected to attend an
19 institution of higher education as defined in section 2 of this act;
20 and

21 (d) The number of children who are eligible, as defined in RCW
22 (~~43.215.405~~) 43.216.505, to participate in, and the number of
23 children actually served by, the early childhood education and
24 assistance program.

25 (8) The caseload forecast council shall forecast the temporary
26 assistance for needy families and the working connections child care
27 programs as a courtesy.

28 (9) The caseload forecast council shall forecast youth
29 participating in the extended foster care program pursuant to RCW
30 74.13.031 separately from other children who are residing in foster
31 care and who are under eighteen years of age.

32 (10) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the
33 definitions provided in RCW 43.88.020 apply to this chapter.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 11.** Sections 1 through 9 of this act
35 constitute a new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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