
HOUSE BILL 1840

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2022 Regular Session

By Representatives Ortiz-Self, Callan, Macri, Santos, Orwall, Simmons, Chopp, Slatter, Bergquist, Ryu, Valdez, Pollet, Riccelli, Davis, Harris-Talley, Taylor, and Frame

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1 AN ACT Relating to improving diversity, equity, and mental health
2 at the community and technical colleges; amending RCW 28B.50.930;
3 creating new sections; and providing expiration dates.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** It is the legislature's intent to further
6 the effort to make community and technical colleges more welcoming
7 and inclusive for all students by continuing to build on previous
8 legislative efforts to improve diversity, equity, and mental health.
9 Therefore, the legislature intends to establish a task force to
10 examine the ways that diversity and equity can be improved at the
11 state's community and technical colleges while expanding the pilot
12 program to increase student access to mental health counseling and
13 services.

14 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The task force on improving equity and
15 diversity at community and technical colleges is established.

16 (1) The task force shall include the following members:

17 (a) The president of the senate shall appoint one member from
18 each of the two largest caucuses of the senate and the speaker of the
19 house of representatives shall appoint one member from each of the
20 two largest caucuses of the house of representatives. One of the

1 legislative members must also be a member of the workforce education
2 investment accountability and oversight board under RCW 28C.18.200;

3 (b) The governor shall appoint five members representing diverse
4 populations in the community and technical college sector from
5 recommendations made by the college board as defined in RCW
6 28B.50.030 as follows:

7 (i) Two community and technical college students selected from
8 colleges where the student population is at least 40 percent students
9 from historically underrepresented populations;

10 (ii) A president of a community and technical college;

11 (iii) A faculty member of a community and technical college
12 faculty collective bargaining unit; and

13 (iv) A member of a local or regional workforce development
14 council;

15 (c) The executive director or designee of the college board as
16 defined in RCW 28B.50.030; and

17 (d) The executive director or designee of the student achievement
18 council under chapter 28B.77 RCW.

19 (2) The task force shall choose its chair from among its
20 membership. The college board shall convene the initial meeting of
21 the task force.

22 (3) The task force shall examine and make recommendations on how
23 equity and diversity can be improved at the community and technical
24 colleges, especially regarding the following:

25 (a) Faculty compensation and benefits;

26 (b) Faculty recruitment and retention;

27 (c) Student persistence and completion, especially for
28 historically underrepresented students, students with disabilities,
29 and members of the LGBTQ population, as defined in RCW 43.114.010;

30 (d) Financial aid programs and student supports; and

31 (e) How diversity and equity are addressed by higher education
32 state agencies, institutions, and statutorily created boards.

33 (4) Staff support for the task force shall be provided by the
34 college board as defined in RCW 28B.50.030.

35 (5) Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for
36 travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative
37 members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they
38 are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer,
39 governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for
40 other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

1 (6) The task force shall report its findings and recommendations
2 to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature in
3 accordance with RCW 43.01.036. The task force shall submit a
4 preliminary report by November 1, 2022, and a final report to the
5 legislature by November 1, 2023.

6 (7) This section expires July 1, 2024.

7 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28B.50.930 and 2021 c 272 s 6 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
10 specific purpose, the college board shall administer a pilot program
11 to increase student access to mental health counseling and services.

12 (2) The college board, in collaboration with the selection
13 committee, shall select community or technical colleges to
14 participate in the pilot program. For the 2022-23 academic year, the
15 college board shall select an additional four community or technical
16 colleges to participate in the pilot program. At least half of the
17 participating colleges must be located outside of the Puget Sound
18 area. For purposes of this section, "Puget Sound area" means
19 Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Thurston counties. Each participating
20 college must receive a grant to implement one or more strategies to
21 increase student access to mental health counseling and services,
22 including substance use disorder counseling and services.

23 (3) (a) A selection committee consisting of the following shall
24 assist with the application selection process:

25 (i) One community or technical college president;

26 (ii) One community or technical college vice president for
27 student services or student instruction;

28 (iii) Two faculty counselors employed at a community or technical
29 college; and

30 (iv) One community or technical college student.

31 (b) The selection committee may consult with representatives of
32 an entity within a college or university that has expertise in
33 suicide prevention and the department of health in developing
34 selection criteria.

35 (4) Community and technical colleges wishing to participate in
36 the pilot program shall apply to the college board. Applicants must
37 identify opportunities for expanding on-campus mental health
38 counseling and services. Applicants must also show a commitment to
39 further develop partnerships by engaging external community

1 providers, including those who provide crisis services and substance
2 use disorder treatment and counseling. Applications that demonstrate
3 plans to include one or more of the following strategies recommended
4 by the community and technical college counselors task force must be
5 prioritized:

6 (a) Improve equity, diversity, and inclusion of all races in
7 counseling services, such as by diversifying the counselor workforce
8 by adopting equity-centered recruiting, training, and retention
9 practices or by providing equity training and awareness for all
10 counselors;

11 (b) Meet mental health needs of students through an all-campus
12 effort;

13 (c) Engage students to help increase mental health and counseling
14 awareness and promote help-seeking behavior through student groups
15 and other methods;

16 (d) Increase the visibility of counseling services on campus;

17 (e) Increase or expand external partnerships with community
18 service providers;

19 (f) Adopt the use of telebehavioral health, especially in
20 underresourced communities;

21 (g) Develop an assessment of counseling services to inform
22 improvements and ensure counseling services are meeting student
23 needs; or

24 (h) Implement counseling approaches grounded in theory that have
25 evidence of being effective.

26 (5) Colleges selected to participate in the pilot program that
27 use grant funding to hire additional mental health counselors must
28 hire counselors who have specific graduate-level training for meeting
29 the mental and behavioral health needs of students.

30 (6) Colleges selected to participate in the pilot program shall
31 submit a joint report to the appropriate committees of the
32 legislature and in accordance with RCW 43.01.036 by November 1, 2023.
33 The report must include:

34 (a) Information on which colleges were selected for the pilot
35 program, how much grant funding was received per college, and what
36 strategies each implemented to increase student access to mental
37 health counseling and services;

38 (b) Demographic data of students accessing mental health
39 counseling and services, including those students who are considered

1 underrepresented or traditionally have limited access to mental
2 health counseling and services;

3 (c) Whether the mental health counseling and services provided
4 are meeting the demand of students in terms of type and availability,
5 and whether the various types of mental health counseling and
6 services are being provided by community providers versus on-campus
7 services;

8 (d) Information and data on the effectiveness, including cost-
9 effectiveness, of each strategy used to increase student access to
10 mental health counseling and services, including substance use
11 disorder counseling and services, such as the number of additional
12 students served, reduced wait times for counseling appointments, or
13 other data that reflects expanded access; and

14 (e) Lessons learned and recommendations for improving student
15 access to mental health counseling and services at community and
16 technical colleges and to community providers, including whether
17 there were any strategies implemented that proved more effective than
18 others in increasing access.

19 (7) Colleges selected for the pilot program shall conspicuously
20 post on their websites and include in the report to the legislature
21 the definitions for key terms including: Diversity, equity,
22 inclusion, culturally competent, culturally appropriate, historically
23 marginalized communities, communities of color, low-income
24 communities, and community organizations.

25 (8) The pilot program expires July 1, (~~2025~~) 2026.

26 (9) This section expires January 1, (~~2026~~) 2027.

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