AN ACT Relating to apprenticeships and higher education; amending RCW 28B.92.030 and 49.04.150; adding a new chapter to Title 28B RCW; creating a new section; and providing an expiration date.

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

NEW SECTION. Sec. 1. The legislature recognizes the institutional costs of community and technical colleges to deliver, host, and contract related supplemental instruction for state registered apprenticeships. It is the intent of the legislature to provide dedicated funding support for full-time equivalent student apprenticeship enrollments at the community and technical colleges and that it be phased in over five fiscal years, beginning in fiscal year 2023. If specific funding for dedicated support in this section is not provided in the 2021-2023 supplemental omnibus operating appropriations act, the five-year phase-in of dedicated support proposed must be delayed until such time as specific funding is provided.

Sec. 2. RCW 28B.92.030 and 2019 c 406 s 21 are each amended to read as follows:
(As used in this chapter) The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

1. "Council" means the student achievement council.
2. "Financial aid" means either loans, grants, or both, to students who demonstrate financial need enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a student at institutions of higher education.
3. "Financial need" means a demonstrated financial inability to bear the total cost of education as directed in rule by the office.
4. "Institution" or "institutions of higher education" means:
   - Any public university, college, community college, or technical college operated by the state of Washington or any political subdivision thereof; or
   - Any other university, college, school, or institute in the state of Washington offering instruction beyond the high school level that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for the purposes of this section and that agrees to and complies with program rules adopted pursuant to RCW 28B.92.150. However, any institution, branch, extension or facility operating within the state of Washington that is affiliated with an institution operating in another state must be:
     - A separately accredited member institution of any such accrediting association;
     - A branch of a member institution of an accrediting association recognized by rule of the council for purposes of this section, that is eligible for federal student financial aid assistance and has operated as a nonprofit college or university delivering on-site classroom instruction for a minimum of twenty consecutive years within the state of Washington, and has an annual enrollment of at least seven hundred full-time equivalent students;
     - A nonprofit institution recognized by the state of Washington as provided in RCW 28B.77.240; or
     - An approved apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW.
4. "Maximum Washington college grant":
   - For students attending two or four-year institutions of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, is tuition and estimated fees for fifteen quarter credit hours or the equivalent, as determined by the office, including operating fees, building fees, and services and activities fees.
(b) For students attending private four-year not-for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is nine thousand seven hundred thirty-nine dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(c) For students attending two-year private not-for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is three thousand six hundred ninety-four dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(d) For students attending four-year private for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is eight thousand five hundred seventeen dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(e) For students attending two-year private for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20 academic year, is two thousand eight hundred twenty-three dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(f) For students attending Western Governors University-Washington, as established in RCW 28B.77.240, in the 2019-20 academic year, is five thousand six hundred nineteen dollars and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor.

(g) For students attending approved apprenticeship programs, beginning in the 2022-23 academic year, is ((tuition and fees, as determined by the office, in addition to required program supplies and equipment)) the same amount as the maximum Washington college grant for students attending two-year institutions of higher education as defined in (a) of this subsection to be used for tuition and fees, program supplies and equipment, and other costs that facilitate educational endeavors.

(6) "Office" means the office of student financial assistance.

(7) "Tuition growth factor" means an increase of no more than the average annual percentage growth rate of the median hourly wage for Washington for the previous fourteen years as the wage is determined by the federal bureau of labor statistics.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. (1) It is the intent of the legislature to remove barriers for students enrolled in a registered apprenticeship
program under chapter 49.04 RCW to access the Washington college grant.

(2) It is the goal of the legislature that students enrolled in registered apprenticeship programs and receiving related supplemental instruction at a community and technical college have access to the Washington college grant through the financial aid office at their college. The Washington student achievement council shall verify access to the Washington college grant for students receiving their related supplemental instruction not at a community and technical college.

(3) The state board for community and technical colleges must fully implement this goal by the beginning of the 2025-26 academic year.

(4) As part of the implementation process, the state board for community and technical colleges must collaborate with the office of student financial assistance, as defined in RCW 28B.92.030, to create a student information technology interface to simplify the application, verification of registration, eligibility, and award to students.

(5) The state board for community and technical colleges and the office of student financial assistance must establish data-sharing agreements with other state agencies to verify student data.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. (1) The state board for community and technical colleges shall:

(a) Evaluate paths to credentials for apprentices, including recommendations on the requirements and benefits of expanding the multioccupational trades degree, and exploration of other credentials that will support transfer to baccalaureate degrees or other advanced credentials for apprentices. This evaluation may include options for instructional modality and analysis of the opportunities and limitations for incorporating general education course requirements into degree pathways for apprentices;

(b) Examine national best practices in delivery and award of educational credentials to apprentices. This exploration may include assessment of the governance structures and operational models for delivery of apprenticeship degree pathways, including operational considerations and costs associated with those models, and make recommendations on the model or models best suited for implementation in Washington;
(c) Research apprentices' demand for degrees, including at which stage in their career a person may seek credentials from their apprenticeship towards a degree;

(d) Assist the work group established in subsection (4) of this section;

(e) Review the current funding model for apprentices within the community and technical college system. The board must consult with the department of labor and industries, the Washington state labor council, and the Washington building trades council to provide recommendations to the legislature on a sustainable funding model for related supplemental instruction and credit for apprentices through the community and technical college system to ensure it fully covers institutional costs of delivering, hosting, and contracting. These recommendations must be included in the annual report established in subsection (2) of this section;

(f) Identify and remove barriers for apprentices to access the college grant, established under RCW 28B.92.200;

(g) Consult with an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the joint transfer council of Washington, the department of labor and industries, the Washington state labor council, the Washington building trades council, the student achievement council, the independent colleges of Washington, private career colleges, an accrediting body, career connect, and other stakeholders with interests and expertise in apprenticeship training and higher education mobility.

(2) The state board for community and technical colleges shall report annually by December 1st, beginning in 2023, in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, its progress, findings, and recommendations to the appropriate higher education committees of the legislature in creating degree pathways for apprentices required in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The apprenticeship council, in consultation with the state board for community and technical colleges, the student achievement council, and an organization representing the presidents of the public four-year institutions of higher education, shall explore whether the state should establish an institution, or centralized program, for apprentices to receive related supplemental instruction for credit towards a degree. A report on their findings, with a
recommendation, must be included in the December 1, 2023, annual report established in subsection (2) of this section.

(4) The state board for community and technical colleges shall convene a work group with the apprenticeship council, or their delegate, and a national accrediting body to study and develop a plan for establishing either credit or course equivalencies, or both, for all related supplemental instruction coursework.

(5) This section expires July 1, 2028.

Sec. 5. RCW 49.04.150 and 2003 c 128 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) An apprenticeship committee may recommend to its community or technical college partner or partners that an associate degree pathway be developed for the committee's program.

(2) In consultation with the state board for community and technical colleges, the apprenticeship committee and the college or colleges involved with the program shall consider the extent apprentices in the program are likely to pursue an associate degree and the extent a pathway could reduce redundancy of course requirements between the apprenticeship and a degree.

(3) If the apprenticeship committee and the college or colleges involved with the program determine that a pathway would be beneficial for apprentices and assist them in obtaining an associate degree, the apprenticeship committee may request that a pathway be established as provided in RCW 28B.50.890.

(4)(a) For active state apprenticeship programs registered during or before July 1, 2022, the credit or course equivalencies must be established by the 2028-29 school year. All programs applying for approval as a state registered apprenticeship program by the apprenticeship council after the 2022-23 school year, must have credit or course equivalencies established before being approved. The apprenticeship council may establish an exemption from this requirement when either all reasonable efforts to help establish course or course equivalencies have been exhausted or when practical.

(b) In the course of assisting apprenticeship programs establish credit or course equivalencies for approved related supplemental instruction coursework, the apprenticeship council or their delegate may consult with community and technical college faculty representatives, the state board for community and technical colleges, an organization representing the presidents of the public
four-year institutions of higher education, and the joint transfer
council of Washington. The apprenticeship council shall share its
progress with the state board for community and technical colleges
annually for the purpose of the reporting requirement established in
section 4 of this act.

NEW SECTION. Sec. 6. Sections 3 and 4 of this act constitute a
new chapter in Title 28B RCW.

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