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**SENATE BILL 5712**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Liias, Saldaña, Hasegawa, Lovelett, Nguyen, Valdez, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to expanding the Washington college grant and establishing the Washington college promise program; amending RCW 28B.92.205; adding a new section to chapter 28B.92 RCW; adding a new chapter to Title 28B RCW; and providing an effective date.

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

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.92.205 and 2022 c 297 s 949 are each amended to read as follows:

In addition to other eligibility requirements outlined in this chapter, students who demonstrate financial need are eligible to receive the Washington college grant. Financial need is as follows:

(1) ((~~Until academic year 2020-21, students with family incomes between zero and fifty percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. Grants for students with incomes between fifty-one and seventy percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall be prorated at the following percentages of the maximum Washington college grant amount:~~

~~(a) Seventy percent for students with family incomes between fifty-one and fifty-five percent of the state median family income;~~

~~(b) Sixty-five percent for students with family incomes between fifty-six and sixty percent of the state median family income;~~

~~(c) Sixty percent for students with family incomes between sixty-one and sixty-five percent of the state median family income; and~~

~~(d) Fifty percent for students with family incomes between sixty-six and seventy percent of the state median family income.~~

~~(2)~~)) Beginning with academic year ((~~2020-21, except during the 2022-23 academic year~~)) 2023-24, students with family incomes between zero and ((~~fifty-five~~)) 75 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. ((~~During the 2022-23 academic year, students with family incomes between zero and 60 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant.~~)) Grants for students with incomes between ((~~fifty-six~~)) 76 and ((~~one hundred~~)) 100 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall be prorated at the following percentages of the maximum Washington college grant amount:

(a) ((~~Seventy~~)) 50 percent for students with family incomes between ((~~fifty-six~~)) 76 and ((~~sixty~~)) 80 percent of the state median family income((~~, except during the 2022-23 academic year~~));

(b) ((~~Sixty~~)) 25 percent for students with family incomes between ((~~sixty-one~~)) 81 and ((~~sixty-five~~)) 90 percent of the state median family income; and

(c) ((~~Fifty~~)) 10 percent for students with family incomes between ((~~sixty-six~~)) 91 and ((~~seventy~~)) 100 percent of the state median family income((~~;~~

~~(d) Twenty-four and one-half percent for students with family incomes between seventy-one and seventy-five percent of the state median family income; and~~

~~(e) Ten percent for students with family incomes between seventy-six and one hundred percent of the state median family income~~)).

(2) Beginning with academic year 2024-25, students with family incomes between zero and 100 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. Grants for students with incomes between 100 and 150 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family size, shall be prorated at the following percentages of the maximum Washington college grant amount:

(a) 50 percent for students with family incomes between 101 and 125 percent of the state median family income; and

(b) 25 percent for students with family incomes between 126 and 150 percent of the state median family income.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.92 RCW to read as follows:

(1) As part of the Washington college grant program, all Washington college grant recipients who qualify for the maximum Washington college grant are entitled to also receive an annual bridge grant.

(2) The office shall award bridge grants to eligible students beginning with the 2022-23 academic year.

(a) For Washington college grant recipients who receive a maximum award, but who are not recipients of the college bound scholarship program under chapter 28B.118 RCW, the bridge grant shall be $1,000, prorated per term.

(b) For Washington college grant recipients who receive a maximum award, but who are also recipients of the college bound scholarship program under chapter 28B.118 RCW, the bridge grant shall be $500, prorated per term.

(3) To receive the full bridge grant for which the student qualifies, the student needs to be enrolled in an institution of higher education on at least a half-time basis. Students enrolled less than half-time shall receive a prorated bridge grant.

(4) The bridge grant shall be applied to a student's financial aid package after all other gift aid has been awarded to the student.

(5) As used in this section, "bridge grant" means an annual stipend provided in addition to the Washington college grant to provide supplementary financial support to low-income students to cover higher education expenses beyond tuition and fees, such as books, lab fees, supplies, technology, transportation, housing, and child care.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The Washington college promise program is hereby created.

(2) Beginning with the 2025-26 school year the student achievement council shall administer the Washington college promise program for resident students seeking an associate's degree, certificate, or apprenticeship from a community or technical college under the terms and conditions in this section.

(3) To be eligible for the Washington college promise program, a student must:

(a) Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment for at least three quarter credits or the equivalent semester credits at a community or technical college as defined in chapter 28B.50 RCW;

(b) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a) through (e);

(c) File an annual application for financial aid as approved by the office; and

(d) Not have earned an associate degree or higher from a postsecondary institution.

(4) Once a student has earned 45 credits, the student must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 to remain eligible for the Washington college promise program.

(5) Washington college promise program eligibility shall not extend beyond 120 credits or four calendar years since the student first began receiving benefits under this chapter.

(6) An eligible degree or certificate program is limited to:

(a) An associate degree;

(b) Academic programs with credits that can fully transfer via articulation agreement toward a baccalaureate degree or postbaccalaureate degree at an institution of higher education;

(c) Professional and technical programs that lead to a recognized postsecondary credential;

(d) Apprenticeship programs established pursuant to RCW 49.04.010 and conducted in association with any community or technical college.

(7)(a) The office shall award grants to students who meet criteria in (b) of this subsection for an amount up to the cost of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020, services and activities fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.041, and a cost of attendance stipend minus all other gift aid. The calculation in this subsection (7)(a) shall not result in the reduction of gift aid.

(b) Up to $1,500 for books and other related higher education expenses must be provided as a stipend to students. If a student eligible for the stipend under this subsection (7)(b) is enrolled less than full time, the student must receive a prorated portion of the stipend based on the number of credits in which the student is enrolled.

(8) By December 1, 2027, and annually by December 1st thereafter, the state board for community and technical colleges shall report to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees of the legislature on the following impacts of the program:

(a) Student enrollment in the eligible degree or certificate programs defined in subsection (6) of this section;

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

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

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

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  If any county or municipal corporation establishes or has established a college promise program through ordinance or initiative that provides tuition, scholarships, or other assistance to students in the community and technical colleges, the resources provided under section 3 of this act may be used to replace or to supplement the aid provided by the county or municipal corporation in accordance with rules established for this purpose by the Washington student achievement council.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  Section 3 of this act takes effect January 1, 2024.

**--- END ---**