
Appropriations Committee

ESSB 5702

Brief Description: Expanding the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth pilot program.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators Trudeau, Nobles, Dhingra, Hunt, Lias, Lovelett, Nguyen, Pedersen, Saldaña, Valdez and Wilson, C.).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Removes the expiration date for the Students Experiencing Homelessness Program.
- Expands the program to allow for all public four-year institutions, community and technical colleges, and a tribal college to establish a program.
- Adds a grant program for participating community and technical colleges in the students experiencing homelessness program to establish a subsidized housing or housing voucher program.

Hearing Date: 3/15/23

Staff: Kate Henry (786-7349).

Background:

In 2019 Second Substitute Senate Bill 5800 established pilot programs to provide assistance and accommodations to students experiencing homelessness and to students who were in foster care when they graduated high school.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (State Board) established pilot programs

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at four college districts, with two on each side of the Cascade Mountains. The Student Achievement Council (Council) chose Eastern Washington University and Western Washington University to establish pilot programs.

The participating community and technical colleges (CTCs) and four-year institutions must provide accommodations to homeless students and students who were in foster care at high school graduation. The accommodations may include:

- access to laundry facilities, storage, locker rooms and showers, and technology;
- reduced-price meals or meal plans;
- access to short-term housing or housing assistance, especially during seasonal breaks; and
- case management services.

The pilot program sites varied in the way accommodations were provided. Participating institutions must provide a joint report to the Legislature by December 1, 2023.

In 2021 Substitute House Bill 1166 expanded the program to include two additional four-year institutions, one on each side of the Cascade Mountains. The pilot is expanded at CTCs for four additional sites. The total CTC sites must have no less than four locations outside the Puget Sound region. The pilot program's expiration date was extended to July 1, 2024, from July 1, 2023.

Summary of Bill:

The expiration date for the Students Experiencing Homelessness Program is removed. The Council may choose all six public four-year institutions and a tribal college, and the State Board may choose all 34 community and technical colleges to establish a program.

A new grant program is created for the State Board to distribute grants to establish partnerships between CTCs and public housing authorities or nonprofit community organizations to design and administer a subsidized housing or housing voucher program for Washington College Grant eligible students. The initial round of grants must prioritize colleges and public housing authorities or nonprofit community organizations with experience partnering to administer a housing voucher or subsidized housing program. The grant program is subject to appropriation.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.