
Appropriations Committee

HB 1540

Brief Description: Expanding eligibility for the students experiencing homelessness and foster youth program to an accredited tribal college.

Sponsors: Representatives Timmons, Eslick, Ortiz-Self, Ramel, Reed, Duerr, Kloba, Macri, Callan, Zahn, Ormsby, Pollet, Scott, Doglio, Hill and Simmons; by request of Student Achievement Council.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expands the Students Experiencing Homelessness program to include a tribal college.

Hearing Date: 1/29/25

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

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

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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. The participating institutions provided a joint report to the Legislature on December 1, 2023, and annually thereafter.

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 was 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.

In 2023 Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5702 removed the expiration date for the pilot program and subject to appropriation, all CTCs and public four-year institutions are eligible to participate in the program.

The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accredits institutions of higher education by applying data and evidence informed standards and processes to support continuous improvements and promote equitable student achievement and success. There is one tribal college in Washington accredited by the NWCCU, the Northwest Indian College, first accredited in 1993.

Summary of Bill:

An accredited tribal college located in Washington may implement a Student Experiencing Homelessness program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 23, 2025.

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