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## Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

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### HB 1587

**Brief Description:** Encouraging local government partner promise scholarship programs within the opportunity scholarship program.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Bergquist, Rude, Reed, Pollet, Reeves, Zahn, Timmons, Doglio, Salahuddin and Nance.

<p><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishes Local Government Partner Promise Scholarship Programs within the Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 2/5/25

**Staff:** Elizabeth Allison (786-7129).

**Background:**

Washington State Opportunity Scholarship Program.

The Washington State Opportunity Scholarship (WSOS) program was established in 2011 to provide scholarships to low- and middle-income resident students pursuing eligible high demand baccalaureate degrees in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and health care, and to encourage scholarship recipients to work in the state upon completion of their degrees.

The WSOS Board is staffed by a program administrator under contract with the board and the Washington Student Achievement Council. The program administrator is a private nonprofit. The WSOS is a private-public match program in which the state matches any private contribution in order to fund the scholarships. The state match is capped at \$50 million annually. Private contributions include donations from private organizations, corporations,

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federally recognized Indian tribes, municipalities, and counties, but does not include state dollars.

By December 1 of each year, the WSOS Board must report to the Governor, the Legislature, and the Student Achievement Council on various metrics, including the number of applicants, the total amount of private contributions, and the total amount of state match funds.

#### Education Research and Data Center.

The Education Research and Data Center (ERDC), within the Office of Financial Management, maintains a longitudinal data system which includes information on students across time and multiple sectors. These sectors include early learning, kindergarten through grade 12, postsecondary education, and the workforce. Data is shared with the ERDC by partnering agencies and institutions across the state. The longitudinal data system facilitates cross-sector data sharing, analysis, research, and reporting.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

A local government may establish its own Local Government Partner Promise Scholarship Program (Promise Scholarship) within the WSOS. The Promise Scholarship must be administered by the WSOS, which must assist the local government partner in the selection, notification, and disbursement of scholarship awards. The administrator must also implement a selection and notification process for students, distribute funds to selected students, and notify institutions of higher education of Promise Scholarship recipients who will attend their institutions.

To be eligible to participate in a Promise Scholarship, a student must:

- have received his or her high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate in Washington; and
- attend a public two-year institution of higher education or a professional-technical certificate or degree program in an education program at an institution of higher education.

A local government that establishes a Promise Scholarship may adopt separate rules for its program that are independent of the broader WSOS program. The Promise Scholarship award amount at minimum must be the difference between the recipient's total tuition and fees minus any state aid. The local government may provide additional scholarship awards to cover additional costs.

A participating student may not receive funds from the broader WSOS Program and a Promise Scholarship at the same time. A participating student's eligibility must be reconfirmed prior to each disbursement of funds.

If there are not enough funds to serve all eligible applicants, priority must be given to applicants to the broader WSOS Program over applicants to a Promise Scholarship Program.

All institutions that participate in the WSOS Program, including Promise Scholarship Programs, must provide timely verification of eligibility information to the WSOS Program administrator. Beginning in 2025 the ERDC must provide data on the outcomes of WSOS Program recipients and graduates by November 1 of each year.

Funds for the Opportunity Scholarship Match Transfer Account may be used for Promise Scholarships.

The annual report must include the total amount of private contributions and state match money received by Promise Scholarship recipients and the total number of students served by each local government Promise Scholarship.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 30, 2025.

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