
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5785

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2025 Regular Session

By Senate Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senator Robinson)

READ FIRST TIME 04/19/25.

1 AN ACT Relating to amending the Washington college grant and
2 college bound scholarship by codifying the Washington college grant
3 maximum award eligibility to 60 percent of the state median family
4 income, modifying grant award amounts and award terms, and limiting
5 institutional eligibility; amending RCW 28B.92.030, 28B.92.205, and
6 28B.118.010; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

8 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28B.92.030 and 2022 c 166 s 1 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter
11 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

12 (1) "Council" means the student achievement council.

13 (2) "Financial aid" means either loans, grants, or both, to
14 students who demonstrate financial need enrolled or accepted for
15 enrollment as a student at institutions of higher education.

16 (3) "Financial need" means a demonstrated financial inability to
17 bear the total cost of education as directed in rule by the office.

18 (4) "Institution" or "institutions of higher education" means:

19 (a) Any public university, college, community college, or
20 technical college operated by the state of Washington or any
21 political subdivision thereof; or

1 (b) Any other university, college, school, or institute in the
2 state of Washington offering instruction beyond the high school level
3 that is a member institution of an accrediting association recognized
4 by rule of the council for the purposes of this section and that
5 agrees to and complies with program rules adopted pursuant to RCW
6 28B.92.150. However, any institution, branch, extension or facility
7 operating within the state of Washington that is affiliated with an
8 institution operating in another state must be:

9 (i) A separately accredited member institution of any such
10 accrediting association;

11 (ii) A branch of a member institution of an accrediting
12 association recognized by rule of the council for purposes of this
13 section, that is eligible for federal student financial aid
14 assistance and has operated as a nonprofit college or university
15 delivering on-site classroom instruction for a minimum of ~~((twenty))~~
16 20 consecutive years within the state of Washington, and has an
17 annual enrollment of at least ~~((seven-hundred))~~ 700 full-time
18 equivalent students;

19 (iii) A nonprofit institution recognized by the state of
20 Washington as provided in RCW 28B.77.240; or

21 (iv) An approved apprenticeship program under chapter 49.04 RCW.

22 (5) "Maximum Washington college grant":

23 (a) For students attending two or four-year institutions of
24 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, is tuition and
25 estimated fees for ~~((fifteen))~~ 15 quarter credit hours or the
26 equivalent, as determined by the office, including operating fees,
27 building fees, and services and activities fees.

28 (b) For students attending private four-year not-for-profit
29 institutions of higher education in Washington ~~((7-in))~~:

30 (i) For the 2019-20 academic year, is ~~((nine-thousand-seven~~
31 ~~hundred-thirty-nine-dollars))~~ \$9,739 and may increase each year
32 afterwards by no more than the tuition growth factor through the end
33 of the 2025-26 academic year; and

34 (ii) Beginning in the 2026-27 academic year, is the average of
35 awards for the same academic year granted to students at the state
36 college and regional universities as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

37 (c) For students attending two-year private not-for-profit
38 institutions of higher education in Washington, in the 2019-20
39 academic year, is ~~((three-thousand-six-hundred-ninety-four-dollars))~~

1 \$3,694 and may increase each year afterwards by no more than the
2 tuition growth factor.

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

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

13 ~~(f))~~ For students attending Western Governors University-
14 Washington, as established in RCW 28B.77.240, in the 2019-20 academic
15 year, is ~~((five thousand six hundred nineteen dollars))~~ \$5,619 and
16 may increase each year afterwards by no more than the tuition growth
17 factor.

18 ~~((g))~~ (e) For students attending approved apprenticeship
19 programs ~~((, beginning in the 2022-23))~~:

20 (i) Through the end of the 2024-25 academic year, is the same
21 amount as the maximum Washington college grant for students attending
22 two-year institutions of higher education as defined in (a) of this
23 subsection to be used for tuition and fees, program supplies and
24 equipment, and other costs that facilitate educational endeavors.

25 (ii) Beginning in 2025-26 academic year, the award is 50 percent
26 of the maximum Washington college grant award for students attending
27 two-year institutions of higher education as provided in (a) of this
28 subsection to be used for tuition and fees, program supplies and
29 equipment, and other costs that facilitate educational endeavors.

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

31 (7) "Tuition growth factor" means an increase of no more than the
32 average annual percentage growth rate of the median hourly wage for
33 Washington for the previous ~~((fourteen))~~ 14 years as the wage is
34 determined by the federal bureau of labor statistics.

35 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28B.92.205 and 2023 c 475 s 923 are each amended to
36 read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

16 ~~(2) Beginning with academic year 2020-21, except during the~~
17 ~~2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 academic years)) Beginning with the~~
18 ~~2025-26 academic year, students with family incomes between zero and~~
19 ~~((fifty-five)) 60 percent of the state median family income, adjusted~~
20 ~~for family size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant~~
21 ~~as defined in RCW 28B.92.030. ((During the 2022-23, 2023-24, and~~
22 ~~2024-25 academic years, students with family incomes between zero and~~
23 ~~sixty percent of the state median family income, adjusted for family~~
24 ~~size, shall receive the maximum Washington college grant.)) Grants~~
25 ~~for students with incomes between ((fifty-six)) 61 and ((one~~
26 ~~hundred)) 100 percent of the state median family income, adjusted for~~
27 ~~family size, shall be prorated at the following percentages of the~~
28 ~~maximum Washington college grant amount:~~

29 ~~((a) Seventy percent for students with family incomes between~~
30 ~~fifty-six and sixty percent of the state median family income, except~~
31 ~~during the 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25 academic years;~~

32 ~~(b) Sixty)) (1) 60 percent for students with family incomes~~
33 ~~between ((sixty-one)) 61 and ((sixty-five)) 65 percent of the state~~
34 ~~median family income((, except during the 2023-24 and 2024-25~~
35 ~~academic years when student grant award shall not be prorated and~~
36 ~~students shall receive the maximum award));~~

37 ~~((c) Fifty)) (2) 50 percent for students with family incomes~~
38 ~~between ((sixty-six)) 66 and ((seventy)) 70 percent of the state~~
39 ~~median family income;~~

1 (~~((d) Twenty-four and one-half)~~) (3) 24.5 percent for students
2 with family incomes between (~~((seventy-one))~~) 71 and (~~((seventy-five))~~)
3 75 percent of the state median family income; and

4 (~~((e) Ten)~~) (4) 10 percent for students with family incomes
5 between (~~((seventy-six))~~) 76 and (~~((one-hundred))~~) 100 percent of the
6 state median family income.

7 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28B.118.010 and 2024 c 323 s 2 are each amended to
8 read as follows:

9 The office of student financial assistance shall design the
10 Washington college bound scholarship program in accordance with this
11 section and in alignment with the Washington college grant program in
12 chapter 28B.92 RCW unless otherwise provided in this section. The
13 right of an eligible student to receive a college bound scholarship
14 vest upon enrollment in the program that is earned by meeting the
15 requirements of this section as it exists at the time of the
16 student's enrollment under subsection (2) of this section.

17 (1) "Eligible students" are those students who:

18 (a) Qualify for free or reduced-price lunches.

19 (i) If a student qualifies in the seventh or eighth grade, the
20 student remains eligible even if the student does not receive free or
21 reduced-price lunches thereafter.

22 (ii) Beginning in the 2019-20 academic year, if a student
23 qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches in the ninth grade and
24 was previously ineligible during the seventh or eighth grade while he
25 or she was a student in Washington, the student is eligible for the
26 college bound scholarship program;

27 (b) Are dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW and:

28 (i) In grade seven through 12; or

29 (ii) Are between the ages of 18 and 21 and have not graduated
30 from high school; or

31 (c) Were dependent pursuant to chapter 13.34 RCW and were adopted
32 between the ages of 14 and 18 with a negotiated adoption agreement
33 that includes continued eligibility for the Washington state college
34 bound scholarship program pursuant to RCW 74.13A.025.

35 (2)(a) Every eligible student shall be automatically enrolled by
36 the office of student financial assistance, with no action necessary
37 by the student, student's family, or student's guardians.

38 (b) Eligible students and the students' parents or guardians
39 shall be notified of the student's enrollment in the Washington

1 college bound scholarship program and the requirements for award of
2 the scholarship by the office of student financial assistance. To the
3 maximum extent practicable, an eligible student must acknowledge
4 enrollment in the college bound scholarship program and receipt of
5 the requirements for award of the scholarship.

6 (c) The office of the superintendent of public instruction and
7 the department of children, youth, and families must provide the
8 office of student financial assistance with a list of eligible
9 students when requested. The office of student financial assistance
10 must determine the most effective methods, including timing and
11 frequency, to notify eligible students of enrollment in the
12 Washington college bound scholarship program. The office of student
13 financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that
14 eligible students acknowledge enrollment in the college bound
15 scholarship program and receipt of the requirements for award of the
16 scholarship. The office of student financial assistance shall also
17 make available to every school district information, brochures, and
18 posters to increase awareness and to enable school districts to
19 notify eligible students directly or through school teachers,
20 counselors, or school activities.

21 (3) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, an
22 eligible student must:

23 (a)(i) Graduate from a public high school under RCW 28A.150.010,
24 an approved private high school under chapter 28A.195 RCW in
25 Washington, or have received home-based instruction under chapter
26 28A.200 RCW; and

27 (ii) For eligible students enrolling in a postsecondary
28 educational institution for the first time beginning with the 2023-24
29 academic year, graduate with at least a "C" average for consideration
30 of direct admission to a public or private four-year institution of
31 higher education;

32 (b) Have no felony convictions;

33 (c) Be a resident student as defined in RCW 28B.15.012(2) (a)
34 through (e); and

35 (d) Have a family income that does not exceed 65 percent of the
36 state median family income at the time of high school graduation.

37 (4)(a) An eligible student who is a resident student under RCW
38 28B.15.012(2)(e) must also provide the institution, as defined in RCW
39 28B.15.012, an affidavit indicating that the individual will file an
40 application to become a permanent resident at the earliest

1 opportunity the individual is eligible to do so and a willingness to
2 engage in any other activities necessary to acquire citizenship,
3 including but not limited to citizenship or civics review courses.

4 (b) For eligible students as defined in subsection (1)(b) and (c)
5 of this section, a student may also meet the requirement in
6 subsection (3)(a) of this section by receiving a high school
7 equivalency certificate as provided in RCW 28B.50.536.

8 (5)(a) For students attending two or four-year institutions of
9 higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, the value of the award
10 shall be (i) the difference between the student's tuition and
11 required fees, less the value of any state-funded grant, scholarship,
12 or waiver assistance the student receives; (ii) plus (~~five hundred~~
13 ~~dollars~~) \$500 for books and materials.

14 (b) For students attending private four-year institutions of
15 higher education in Washington, the award amount shall be the
16 (~~representative~~) average of awards granted to students in public
17 research universities in Washington or the (~~representative~~) average
18 of awards granted to students in public research universities in
19 Washington in the 2014-15 academic year, whichever is greater.

20 (c) For students attending private vocational schools in
21 Washington, the award amount shall be the representative average of
22 awards granted to students in public community and technical colleges
23 in Washington or the representative average of awards granted to
24 students in public community and technical colleges in Washington in
25 the 2014-15 academic year, whichever is greater.

26 (6) Eligible students must enroll no later than the fall term, as
27 defined by the institution of higher education, one academic year
28 following high school graduation. College bound scholarship
29 eligibility may not extend beyond six years or 150 percent of the
30 published length of the program in which the student is enrolled or
31 the credit or clock-hour equivalent.

32 (7) Institutions of higher education shall award the student all
33 need-based and merit-based financial aid for which the student would
34 otherwise qualify. The Washington college bound scholarship is
35 intended to replace unmet need, loans, and, at the student's option,
36 work-study award before any other grants or scholarships are reduced.

37 (8) The first scholarships shall be awarded to students
38 graduating in 2012.

39 (9) The eligible student has a property right in the award, but
40 the state of Washington retains legal ownership of tuition units

1 awarded as scholarships under this chapter until the tuition units
2 are redeemed. These tuition units shall remain separately held from
3 any tuition units owned under chapter 28B.95 RCW by a Washington
4 college bound scholarship recipient.

5 (10)(a) The scholarship award must be used within six years of
6 receipt. Any unused scholarship tuition units revert to the
7 Washington college bound scholarship account.

8 (b) Should the recipient terminate his or her enrollment for any
9 reason during the academic year, the unused portion of the
10 scholarship tuition units shall revert to the Washington college
11 bound scholarship account.

12 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
13 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
14 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
15 effect July 1, 2025.

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