
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 6227

State of Washington

69th Legislature

2026 Regular Session

By Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development (originally sponsored by Senators C. Wilson, Nobles, Conway, Hasegawa, and Lovick)

READ FIRST TIME 01/30/26.

1 AN ACT Relating to formalizing data collection protocols to
2 support parenting students; adding a new section to chapter 28B.77
3 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that Washington
6 lacks a formal, consistent system to identify or track parenting
7 students across institutions of higher education. As a result,
8 parenting students are often invisible in policy development,
9 budgeting decisions, and student support planning, limiting the
10 ability of institutions and the state to understand their needs,
11 measure outcomes, or design effective supports.

12 The legislature further finds that parenting students represent a
13 significant portion of the postsecondary population and face distinct
14 barriers to enrollment, persistence, and completion. Without reliable
15 data, institutions cannot consistently identify student parents,
16 evaluate access to existing resources, or coordinate supports related
17 to child care, basic needs, and financial aid.

18 The intent of this act is to establish consistent, statewide data
19 collection protocols to better understand the experiences and
20 outcomes of parenting students. By improving data quality and
21 coordination, the legislature seeks to support evidence-based

1 policymaking, advance educational equity, and strengthen Washington's
2 future workforce by improving postsecondary completion for student
3 parents and their families.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.77
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) The council shall work with public and private not-for-profit
7 four-year institutions of higher education to develop formal data
8 collection protocols to identify parenting students. Data collection
9 may occur where it is the most feasible, cost-effective, and
10 accurate, such as during enrollment, and should be updated through
11 other annual means. Participating institutions of higher education
12 are encouraged to send their data to the education data center at
13 least annually.

14 (2)(a) The council shall convene a work group to provide
15 recommendations for identifying students' parenting status to inform
16 the implementation of subsection (1) of this section.

17 (b) The work group must include members from the following
18 entities:

19 (i) An organization representing the presidents of the public
20 four-year institutions;

21 (ii) The state board of community and technical colleges;

22 (iii) The Washington student association or an organization that
23 coordinates advocacy for students from public institutions of higher
24 education;

25 (iv) Communities for our colleges; and

26 (v) Other entities as necessary and appropriate with relevant
27 experience in educational persistence and support for parenting
28 students.

29 (c) The work group shall develop recommendations of campus and
30 community partnership practices supportive of parenting students
31 pursuing postsecondary education and submit them to the appropriate
32 committees of the legislature by December 1, 2026, in accordance with
33 RCW 43.01.036.

34 (3) The council may adopt rules to implement this section.

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