
SENATE BILL 5044

State of Washington 63rd Legislature 2013 Regular Session

By Senators Hasegawa, Shin, and Kohl-Welles

Read first time 01/15/13. Referred to Committee on Higher Education .

1 AN ACT Relating to the GET ready for college program; adding a new
2 section to chapter 28B.95 RCW; and creating a new section.

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

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that education is the
5 single most important investment a state can make to ensure that it
6 remains globally competitive. The legislature, Washington citizens,
7 education leaders and practitioners, and students must take collective
8 responsibility to ensure that all qualified citizens have the
9 opportunity to succeed in a world-class, learner-focused, seamless
10 education. The legislature further finds that lifelong learning is a
11 fundamental value of a civil society, the state of Washington, and the
12 primary family of its students.

13 The legislature also finds that early investment in a student can
14 make the difference in the student's aspiration and commitment.
15 Research indicates that students form attitudes about going to college
16 as early as elementary school. If policymakers want to increase
17 participation in the state's apprenticeship programs, colleges, and
18 universities, outreach efforts must begin early and occur often.

1 Saving for college is one way a student's family and extended
2 community can ensure that financial obstacles will not prevent a child
3 from realizing the dream of going to college. A modest financial
4 investment by the state of Washington to initiate a college savings
5 plan will contribute to the success of students in achieving their
6 educational aspirations and will benefit the state's goal of educating
7 more students to higher levels of education.

8 Therefore, the legislature intends to encourage families to begin
9 saving for college by paying the enrollment fee for a GET account and
10 one GET unit for each child born in Washington or a child who moves to
11 Washington, enrolls in a public school, and establishes a domicile in
12 Washington, and supplementing that account with additional GET units
13 over the child's educational career. This action plants the seed,
14 early on, that going to college is possible, regardless of
15 socioeconomic status. It also plants the seed that saving for college
16 is important and provides an easy way to begin saving.

17 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28B.95 RCW
18 to read as follows:

19 (1) The GET ready for college program is established. Subject to
20 funds appropriated for this specific purpose, the office shall pay for
21 the fifty dollar enrollment fee and for one GET unit to open a GET
22 account on behalf of:

23 (a) Every child born in Washington state after the effective date
24 of this section; and

25 (b) Any child born after the effective date of this section, who
26 subsequently moves to Washington state and enrolls in a public school,
27 if one or both of the child's parents or legal guardians have
28 maintained a bona fide domicile in the state of Washington for at least
29 one year.

30 (2) In carrying out this duty, the office shall:

31 (a) Develop and implement a process for establishing the accounts
32 and account beneficiaries;

33 (b) Establish rules for implementing the program;

34 (c) Provide information to hospitals, clinics, physicians and nurse
35 practitioners, birthing centers, community organizations, school
36 districts, and institutions of higher education regarding the program,

1 the state's offer to pay the enrollment fee to open an account, the one
2 unit minimum purchase requirement, and the program benefits and
3 limitations; and

4 (d) Accept grants and donations from private sources to match state
5 funds appropriated for the GET ready for college program.

6 (3) Children who have a GET account opened under the GET ready for
7 college program shall have deposited into that account additional GET
8 units upon the child reaching educational milestones. The office shall
9 purchase GET units to be owned and held in trust by the office and
10 distribute units to individual, personally owned accounts upon the
11 child achieving the following:

- 12 (a) Upon entry into kindergarten, ten units;
- 13 (b) Upon completion of the fourth grade statewide academic
14 assessments for reading, writing, and mathematics, twenty units. The
15 child does not need to meet the state standard to receive the GET
16 units;
- 17 (c) Upon completion of the fifth grade, thirty units;
- 18 (d) Upon completion of the eighth grade, forty units;
- 19 (e) Upon completion of the ninth grade, fifteen units;
- 20 (f) Upon completion of the tenth grade, fifteen units;
- 21 (g) Upon completion of the eleventh grade, twenty units; and
- 22 (h) Upon graduation from a Washington state public high school,
23 fifty units.

24 (4) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
25 enter into any necessary data-sharing agreements with the office to
26 facilitate implementation of this section.

27 (5) The office shall develop necessary forms, policies, and
28 procedures to provide parents or guardians the ability to voluntarily
29 waive any privacy rights to facilitate the exchange of personal
30 information between the common schools and the office for
31 implementation of this section.

32 (6) The GET ready for college account is created in the custody of
33 the state treasurer. The office shall deposit into the account all
34 moneys received for the GET ready for college program from
35 appropriations and private sources. Only the director of the office or
36 the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account.
37 Expenditures from the account, not to exceed five percent, may be used

1 by the office to carry out the provisions of this section. The account
2 is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an
3 appropriation is not required for expenditures.

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