

Updating WSAC & OSPI Data-Sharing Permissions

Simple changes to state law would allow for more equitable access to postsecondary financial aid and educational opportunities for high school students.

The Problem

This proposal builds on SB 5593, passed during the 2023 legislative session, which allowed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to share high school student directory information with institutions of higher education for the purposes of informing Washington high school students of postsecondary educational opportunities available in the state.

Currently, WSAC must request high school student directory information on a district-by-district basis for these same purposes because OSPI is not allowed to share the same data with the agency. This creates an administrative burden for school districts trying to report to two separate state agencies. Many students don't hear from postsecondary programs for a variety of reasons (for example, they haven't taken an SAT or an AP course), and they are not provided proper information on financial aid resources available to them, such as the College Bound Scholarship (CBS) and the Washington College Grant.

The Solution

Amendments to RCW 28B.10.041 and 28A.150.515 would eliminate this problem, allowing both WSAC and institutions of higher education to obtain high school student directory information from OSPI.

An example of the impact this change could have is the CBS program, which provides awareness of available grant funding and resources for low-income students. SB 5321 allowed over 50,000 eligible students each year to be automatically enrolled in the program, but the burden of collecting contact information for students and guardians remains with school staff, resulting in large information gaps. This proposal would streamline the process and take the burden off of 1,800 school counselors and staff so that they have more time and resources to support students directly.

Students from all socioeconomic backgrounds would be enabled to receive a world-class education and ultimately enter the workforce and achieve financial security.

By the Numbers

- **\$0 in public funding** required to enact this proposal.
- **1,800 school counselors and staff** currently spend time collecting and uploading contact information to the WSAC portal for the College Bound Scholarship program alone.
- **180,000+ high school students** will benefit from more efficient contact with WSAC regarding postsecondary education and financial aid opportunities.

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