

Special session to start Monday

Gov. Chris Gregoire has convened a special legislative session to finish work on the 2010 supplemental budget and jobs legislation.

Prior to the conclusion of the regular 2010 Legislative session Thursday night, the House and Senate were unable to reach compromise on a revenue and spending package to address a \$2.8 billion budget gap for the remainder of the biennium.

"I will continue to work with leaders in the House and Senate to find the right approach to cuts and revenue that will keep Washington on the path to economic recovery," the Governor said in a statement announcing the special session. [Read more.](#)

Two houses agree on System Design language

The House and Senate resolved differences over a Senate bill that connects decisions on major higher education system expansions and "mission changes" to an analysis of student and economic demand for the proposed changes.

After discussions among legislators with key roles on the capital budget, the House on Wednesday replaced an earlier amendment to SSB 6355 concerning the prioritization process on higher education capital projects.

Under compromise language passed by the House, which later received concurrence in the Senate, the HECB will send the Office of Financial Management a single, prioritized list of recommended capital projects at public four-year institutions by Nov. 15 of each even-numbered year. The list will include projects that cost-effectively achieve the state's higher education goals, including increased degree production (especially in high demand fields) and promotion of economic development through research and innovation.

The amendment originally passed by the House would have required OFM to convene a work group to produce a single prioritized list by Aug. 15 of each even-numbered year.

Agreement on the capital-projects language paves the way for final approval of the bill in both houses and delivery to the Governor.

System Design endorsed

Another major component of SSB 6355, which was requested by the HECB, requires the HECB to review proposals for major expansions and institutional mission changes, which are defined as changes in degree levels awarded, or an institutional type not currently authorized in statute.

The provision is consistent with the System Design Plan developed last year by the HECB in collaboration with representatives of the higher education community. The plan, which SSB 6355 endorses, proposed an "expand on demand" principle that system growth should follow demand.

The bill also removes restrictions on the number of new applied baccalaureate degrees offered by community and technical colleges, but retains the requirement of HECB approval for new degrees.

A weekly report on
higher education
during the 2010
Legislative Session



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Bill requires policies on credit for non-traditional learning

Policies governing the awarding of academic credit for learning gained outside the traditional academic setting would be developed and submitted to the Legislature under a bill now on the Governor's desk.

Under SSB 6357, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) will work with the HECB and other academic, business and labor entities to develop the policies. They will address academic credit for learning gained through work and military experience, military and law enforcement training, career college training, internships and externships, and apprenticeships.

The Legislature found that many of these experiences "may represent learning outcomes equivalent or superior to those achieved by students in more traditional academic settings."

The policies must address verification, accreditation, transfer of academic credit, licensing, professional recognition, and financial aid.

The SBCTC is to submit policies, along with any recommendations, to the Legislature by Dec. 31, 2010.

CTC efficiency legislation passes Legislature

Legislation promoting efficiencies in the community and technical college system has passed the Legislature.

SB 6359 requires that community college districts coordinate with districts in their regions to avoid unnecessary duplication of student services and administrative functions. The SBCTC is required to establish criteria and procedures for consolidating district structures to form multiple campus districts and identify potential administrative efficiencies. A preliminary report is due this December, and a final report in December 2011.

Lottery bill amended by House Ways & Means

The House Ways & Means Committee on Wednesday approved significant amendments to a Senate bill that would direct future Lottery proceeds into a new account to fund student financial aid programs.

As time ran out for the regular session, E2SSB 6409 was sent back to the Senate, where it could be revived due to its potential connection to the budget. House budget writers have assumed the measure would generate \$30 million in new revenue.

Under the amendment recommended by the Ways & Means Committee, a new Washington Opportunity Pathways Account would be established to receive Lottery revenues over and above the \$102 million currently directed to the Education Construction Account to help build, renovate and remodel schools in the state.

The version passed in the Senate directs that **all** net Lottery revenues be directed to the Opportunity Pathways Account, and the Education Construction Account would be reimbursed with \$102 million from the General Fund.

The Senate version would allow money in the Opportunity Pathways Account to be used to recruit entrepreneurial researchers and to support childhood education and assistance programs (ECEAP) in addition to student financial aid programs; the higher education financial aid programs are permitted uses under the House version.

Both the House and Senate versions require the Lottery to work with the HECB and other entities to develop and implement a plan to market the Lottery as an essential contributor to Washington's efforts to support student financial aid.

Seattle opportunity center bill awaits Governor's signature

A bill passed by the Legislature and scheduled for action by the Governor on Monday statutorily recognizes an existing "opportunity employment and education center" at North Seattle Community College, and requires the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to propose a site for a potential future center elsewhere in the state.

SHB 2684 requires the center to serve as a central location educational and social service providers offering students information on employment, counseling and public benefit programs and services, as well as education, training, financial aid and counseling services offered through community colleges.

The Chancellor of the Seattle Community College District will convene a work group to govern the opportunity and employment education work center. The work group will include workforce development, education, and social service representatives.

- [SHB 3178](#) – Creating efficiencies in the use of technology in state government.
- [SSB 6355](#) – Expanding the higher education system upon proven demand.
- [SSB 6357](#) – Requiring policies for academic recognition of certain life and learning experiences.
- [SSB 6359](#) – Promoting efficiencies including institutional coordination and partnerships in the community and technical college system.
- [SSB 6382](#) – Reducing the cost of state government operations by restricting compensation.
- [SB 6467](#) – Authorizing honorary degrees for students who were ordered into internment camps.
- [E2SSB 6696](#) – Regarding education reform.

Bills delivered to Governor

- [SHB 1545](#) – Authorizing the higher education Coordinating Board to offer higher education annuities and retirement income plans.
- [SHB 2684](#) – Establishing opportunity centers at community colleges
- [HB 2858](#) – Regarding the purchasing authority of institutions of higher education.
- [ESHB 2921](#) – Making 2010 supplemental operation appropriations.
- [HB 2973](#) – Creating resident student classifications for certain members of the military and their spouses and dependents.
- [SHB 2998](#) – Suspending certain monetary awards and salary increases.
- [E2SHB 3141](#) – Redesigning the delivery of temporary assistance to needy families.