**2018 Bill Watch for Student Services**

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March 2018

The Bills in the table below have been signed into law by Governor Inslee as of March 27, 2018.

For full Bill information, go to <http://app.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/> and use the Search by Bill Number feature

| **Bill** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| HB 1169 | **Protections for student loan borrowers in default**  Repeals provisions allowing suspension of a professional license due to student loan default. Changes the judgment interest rate for unpaid private student loan debt to 2 percentage points above the prime rate, unless specified in the contract. Increases the bank account and wage garnishment exemptions for judgments on private student loan debt. Modifies the writs and forms for garnishment and continuing lien on earnings to specify whether a writ is for private student loan debt, and if so, to notify the debtor of their exemption rights for private student loan debt. |
| HB 1488 | **College Bound Scholarship and Opportunity Scholarship: extends CBS/OS to presumed undocumented students who meet certain conditions**  Allows students who meet the 1079 residency criteria to be eligible for the College Bound Scholarship program. Provides that students who have received Opportunity Scholarships may renew their scholarships by filing the Washington Application for State Financial Aid (WAFSA). Provides that, for the purposes of residency for in-state tuition, a person is not a "nonresident student" if the person: (1) has been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) status before, on, or after the effective date of the act, regardless of whether the person is no longer in DACA status due to the termination, suspension, or modification of the DACA program; (2) has U or T nonimmigrant status with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); (3) has been issued a work permit by the USCIS; or (4) is in deferred action status. |
| HB 2822 | **Modifies definition of service animal, and establishes monetary penalties for misrepresentation**  A service animal is a dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability. The tasks performed must be directly related to the person’s disability. Misrepresentation incurs a maximum penalty of $500. |
| SB 5064 | **Exempts student media from mandatory prior review; protects student media advisors from disciplinary action for protecting free expression rights**  An Act related to the freedom of expression rights of student at public schools and institutions of higher education. Exempts student media, whether college-supported or not, from mandatory prior review by college administrators and protects student media advisors from disciplinary action for protecting free expression rights of student journalists. Exemption does not authorize student media expression that is libelous, slanderous, an invasion of privacy or otherwise violates rules, regulations, laws, or student conduct codes. |
| SB 6029 | **Creates Student Loan Advocate position at Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC)**  Creates the Student Education Loan Advocate to receive, review, and provide assistance to student education loan borrowers who file complaints. Requires student loan servicers to obtain a license from the Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) to operate in the state, and permits the DFI to establish fees. Requires servicers to comply with various provisions regarding assessing and crediting fees; account information and dispute requests; acquiring, transferring, and selling servicing rights; and reporting information. Prohibits third-party student loan modification servicers from various practices that may misrepresent the student loan situation or encourage a borrower to do something counterproductive to their situation. Requires the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to study student loan authorities who refinance student loans from proceeds of tax-exempt bonds. |
| SB 6514 | **Establishes a web-based suicide prevention resource and a grant program for suicide prevention (the first 6 grants go to public institutions) and creates data collection and reporting requirements**  An Act relating to implementing a comprehensive approach to suicide prevention and behavioral health in higher education, with enhanced services to student veterans. Authorizes creation of a statewide, publically available, web-based behavioral health and suicide prevention resource. Establishes a suicide prevention in higher education grant program to be administered by the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), awarding the first six grants to public higher education institutions in the state. Requires annual reporting of data by colleges in order to establish a “behavioral health concerns” baseline. |
| SB 6582 | **Prohibits colleges from using an admissions application that requests information about criminal history**  Washington Fair Chance to Education Act. Institutions of higher education may not use an initial admissions application that requests information about the criminal history of the applicant. Colleges may make post-application inquiries to determine admissibility, restrict access to residency, or offer supportive counseling or rehabilitative services and educate the student on the barriers a criminal record may present. |