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CERTIFICATION OF ENROLLMENT

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 2965

Chapter 7, Laws of 2020

66th Legislature
2020 Regular Session

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 17, 2020

Passed by the House March 12, 2020
Yeas 96 Nays 0

LAURIE JINKINS

Speaker of the House of Representatives

Passed by the Senate March 12, 2020
Yeas 48 Nays 0

CYRUS HABIB

President of the Senate

Approved March 17, 2020 2:24 PM

JAY INSLEE

Governor of the State of Washington

CERTIFICATE

I, Bernard Dean, Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives of the State of Washington, do hereby certify that the attached is **ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 2965** as passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate on the dates hereon set forth.

BERNARD DEAN

Chief Clerk

FILED

March 17, 2020

Secretary of State
State of Washington

ENGROSSED HOUSE BILL 2965

AS AMENDED BY THE SENATE

Passed Legislature - 2020 Regular Session

State of Washington 66th Legislature 2020 Regular Session

By Representatives Cody, Schmick, Riccelli, Bergquist, Callan, Dufault, Hudgins, Leavitt, Shewmake, Tharinger, Maycumber, Ramos, Ortiz-Self, and Stonier

Read first time 03/02/20.

AN ACT Relating to the state's response to the novel coronavirus; amending RCW 38.52.105, 50.20.010, and 28A.230.090; adding a new section to chapter 50.16 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 50.29 RCW; creating new sections; making appropriations; providing expiration dates; and declaring an emergency.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The sum of one hundred seventy-five million dollars is appropriated from the budget stabilization account for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and is provided solely for expenditure into the disaster response account, from which it may be appropriated solely for state and local government and federally recognized tribes' response to the novel coronavirus pursuant to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020. For purposes of RCW 43.88.055(4), the appropriation in this section does not alter the requirement to balance in the ensuing biennium.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The sum of one hundred seventy-five million dollars is appropriated from the disaster response account and the sum of twenty-five million dollars is appropriated from the general fund—federal to the office of financial management for the fiscal biennium ending June 30, 2021, and are provided solely for

allotment to state agencies and for distribution to local governments and federally recognized tribes for response to the novel coronavirus pursuant to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020. The appropriations in this section are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

(1) The office of financial management must provide monthly updates on spending from this appropriation to the fiscal committees of the legislature.

(2) Funding from this section may not be used to supplant existing federal, state, tribal, and local funds for services and activities that will assist in the response to the novel coronavirus.

(3) Agencies, federally recognized tribes, and local governments must demonstrate maximum use of available federal funds for novel coronavirus response and recovery efforts before seeking funding from this appropriation. If an agency, federally recognized tribe, or local government subsequently receives reimbursement from federal sources of amounts spent from the appropriation in this section, the agency, federally recognized tribe, or local government must remit the federal funding to the state treasurer for reimbursement to the budget stabilization account.

(4) By July 1, 2021, the office of financial management must certify to the state treasurer the amount of any unobligated moneys in the disaster response account that are attributable to the budget stabilization account appropriation in section 1 of this act, and the treasurer must transfer those moneys back to the budget stabilization account.

(5) In order to facilitate the monthly reporting required by subsection (1) of this section and to increase transparency, the office of financial management must create unique appropriation and expenditure codes to be used in the statewide accounting and financial reporting system that must be used by state agencies and institutions of higher education to separately identify state spending by the appropriations in this act and for other unanticipated spending in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak funded by appropriations in the omnibus operating appropriations act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** The sum of twenty-five million dollars is appropriated from the budget stabilization account for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2020, and is provided solely for expenditure

into the COVID-19 unemployment account for the purposes described in section 5 of this act. For purposes of RCW 43.88.055(4), the appropriation in this section does not alter the requirement to balance in the ensuing biennium.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** A new section is added to chapter 50.16 RCW to read as follows:

(1) The COVID-19 unemployment account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. Revenues to the account shall consist of appropriations and transfers by the legislature and all other funding directed for deposit into the account. Only the commissioner of the employment security department or the commissioner's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. Expenditures from the account may be used only for reimbursing the unemployment trust fund account for unemployment benefits paid to the approved employees of employers approved for such reimbursement pursuant to section 5 of this act. The account is subject to the allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) Any federal funding or relief for novel coronavirus that could be used for the purposes of section 5 of this act must be used first before spending from the account. Additionally, if the employment security department subsequently receives reimbursements from federal sources for amounts spent from the account, the department must remit the federal funding to the state treasurer for reimbursement to the budget stabilization account. If federal law or rules would prevent such remittance, the department must notify the office of financial management and the fiscal committees of the legislature within thirty days of receipt of the reimbursement.

(3) By July 1, 2021, the commissioner must certify to the state treasurer the amount of any unobligated moneys in the COVID-19 unemployment account that are attributable to the budget stabilization account appropriation in section 3 of this act, and the treasurer must transfer those moneys back to the budget stabilization account.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** A new section is added to chapter 50.29 RCW to read as follows:

(1) By September 30, 2020, a contribution paying employer may submit an application to the employment security department to have

the approved benefits paid to approved employees be reimbursed by the COVID-19 unemployment account instead of charged to the employer's experience rating account. The application must be submitted in a form and manner approved by the department through rule.

(2) The department should not approve an application if the benefits paid will not otherwise be charged to the employer's experience rating account or if the employer was otherwise eligible to receive relief of benefit charges.

(3) If the department approves an employer's application, the department will not charge the forgiven benefits to the employer's experience rating account. The commissioner shall instead transfer from the COVID-19 unemployment account to the unemployment trust fund account an amount equal to the forgiven benefits.

(4) If the department rejects an employer's application, the department shall present the employer with the reasons why the application was rejected. The reasons for the rejection are final and nonappealable.

(5) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Approved employee" means an employee who:

(i) Was temporarily laid off as a direct or indirect consequence of an outbreak of COVID-19;

(ii) Was approved by the department to be on standby pursuant to rules adopted by the department;

(iii) Has returned to the same employment with the employer the employee had prior to the temporary unemployment; and

(iv) Meets other criteria the department may establish by rule.

(b) "Approved benefits" means benefits paid to an approved employee while the approved employee was on standby pursuant to rules adopted by the department.

(c) "Total approved benefits" means the sum total of all approved benefits paid to all approved employees.

(d) "Forgiveness ratio" is computed by dividing the amount of money in the COVID-19 unemployment account by the total approved benefits. The forgiveness ratio cannot be more than 1.

(e) "Forgiven benefits" means the approved benefits for an individual employer multiplied by the forgiveness ratio.

(6) The department shall adopt such rules as are necessary to carry out the purposes of this section.

(7) This section expires July 30, 2021.

Sec. 6. RCW 38.52.105 and 2019 c 415 s 956 are each amended to read as follows:

The disaster response account is created in the state treasury. Moneys may be placed in the account from legislative appropriations and transfers, federal appropriations, or any other lawful source. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only for support of state agency and local government disaster response and recovery efforts, including response by state and local government and federally recognized tribes to the novel coronavirus pursuant to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, and to reimburse the workers' compensation funds and self-insured employers under RCW 51.16.220. During the 2017-2019 and 2019-2021 fiscal biennia, expenditures from the disaster response account may be used for military department operations and to support wildland fire suppression preparedness, prevention, and restoration activities by state agencies and local governments. During the 2017-2019 and 2019-2021 fiscal biennia, the legislature may direct the treasurer to make transfers of moneys in the disaster response account to the state general fund. It is the intent of the legislature that these policies will be continued in subsequent fiscal biennia.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** (1) The department of social and health services is authorized to determine nursing facility payments to adequately resource facilities responding to the novel coronavirus outbreak pursuant to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020. The medicaid payments provided to nursing facilities in response to this state of emergency shall be determined by the department as appropriate to address the immediate safety needs of Washington state citizens and shall not be subject to this chapter's medicaid methodology. Any nursing facility payment made under this section shall not be included in the calculation of the annual statewide weighted average nursing facility payment rate.

(2) This section expires June 30, 2021.

Sec. 8. RCW 50.20.010 and 2019 c 50 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) An unemployed individual shall be eligible to receive waiting period credits or benefits with respect to any week in his or her eligibility period only if the commissioner finds that:

(a) He or she has registered for work at, and thereafter has continued to report at, an employment office in accordance with such regulation as the commissioner may prescribe, except that the commissioner may by regulation waive or alter either or both of the requirements of this subdivision as to individuals attached to regular jobs and as to such other types of cases or situations with respect to which the commissioner finds that the compliance with such requirements would be oppressive, or would be inconsistent with the purposes of this title;

(b) He or she has filed an application for an initial determination and made a claim for waiting period credit or for benefits in accordance with the provisions of this title;

(c) He or she is able to work, and is available for work in any trade, occupation, profession, or business for which he or she is reasonably fitted.

(i) To be available for work, an individual must be ready, able, and willing, immediately to accept any suitable work which may be offered to him or her and must be actively seeking work pursuant to customary trade practices and through other methods when so directed by the commissioner or the commissioner's agents. If a labor agreement or dispatch rules apply, customary trade practices must be in accordance with the applicable agreement or rules.

(ii) Until June 30, 2021, an individual under quarantine or isolation, as defined by the department of health, as directed by a public health official during the novel coronavirus outbreak pursuant to the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, will meet the requirements of this subsection (1)(c) if the individual is able to perform, available to perform, and actively seeking work which can be performed while under quarantine or isolation.

(iii) For the purposes of this subsection, "customary trade practices" includes compliance with an electrical apprenticeship training program that includes a recognized referral system under apprenticeship program standards approved by the Washington state apprenticeship and training council;

(d) He or she has been unemployed for a waiting period of one week;

(e) He or she participates in reemployment services if the individual has been referred to reemployment services pursuant to the

profiling system established by the commissioner under RCW 50.20.011, unless the commissioner determines that:

(i) The individual has completed such services; or

(ii) There is justifiable cause for the claimant's failure to participate in such services; and

(f) As to weeks beginning after March 31, 1981, which fall within an extended benefit period as defined in RCW 50.22.010, the individual meets the terms and conditions of RCW 50.22.020 with respect to benefits claimed in excess of twenty-six times the individual's weekly benefit amount.

(2) An individual's eligibility period for regular benefits shall be coincident to his or her established benefit year. An individual's eligibility period for additional or extended benefits shall be the periods prescribed elsewhere in this title for such benefits.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 9.** If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state or the eligibility of employers in this state for federal unemployment tax credits, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict, and the finding or determination does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state or the granting of federal unemployment tax credits to employers in this state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 10.** (1)(a) Recognizing that schools and districts throughout Washington have different needs and resources to respond to the impact of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, within existing resources, the state board of education may administer an emergency waiver program to grant local education agencies and private schools flexibility so that students in the graduating class of 2020 or earlier who were on track to graduate before the gubernatorial declaration of emergency of February 29, 2020, and any subsequent amendments to that proclamation, are not negatively impacted by measures taken by the local education agency or private school in response to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

(b) Consistent with the intent of the emergency waiver program, the state board of education may adopt rules to allow:

(i) School districts, charter schools established under chapter 28A.710 RCW, and tribal compact schools operated according to the terms of state-tribal education compacts authorized under chapter 28A.715 RCW to apply to the state board of education for a waiver of high school graduation requirements or equivalencies established under RCW 28A.230.090 for students in the graduating class of 2020 or earlier who cannot meet the statewide minimum credit and subject area graduation requirements due to school closures related to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19). The state board of education may approve waivers that meet criteria including demonstration of a good faith effort to address core course requirements and credit deficiencies through other mechanisms; and

(ii) The state board of education to waive provisions relating to the number of instructional hours, the number of school days, credit-based graduation requirements, and other provisions for the 2019-20 school year for private schools established under chapter 28A.195 RCW that close due to the novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

(2) This section expires July 31, 2020.

Sec. 11. RCW 28A.230.090 and 2019 c 252 s 103 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) The state board of education shall establish high school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students, except as provided in RCW 28A.230.122 and 28A.655.250 and except those equivalencies established by local high schools or school districts under RCW 28A.230.097. The purpose of a high school diploma is to declare that a student is ready for success in postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship, and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner.

(a) Any course in Washington state history and government used to fulfill high school graduation requirements shall consider including information on the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who were the first inhabitants of the state.

(b) Except as provided otherwise in this subsection, the certificate of academic achievement requirements under RCW 28A.655.061 or the certificate of individual achievement requirements under RCW 28A.155.045 are required for graduation from a public high school but are not the only requirements for graduation. The requirement to earn a certificate of academic achievement to qualify for graduation from a public high school concludes with the

graduating class of 2019. The obligation of qualifying students to earn a certificate of individual achievement as a prerequisite for graduation from a public high school concludes with the graduating class of 2021.

(c)(i) Each student must have a high school and beyond plan to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school.

(ii)(A) A high school and beyond plan must be initiated for each student during the seventh or eighth grade. In preparation for initiating that plan, each student must first be administered a career interest and skills inventory.

(B) For students with an individualized education program, the high school and beyond plan must be developed in alignment with their individualized education program. The high school and beyond plan must be developed in a similar manner and with similar school personnel as for all other students.

(iii)(A) The high school and beyond plan must be updated to reflect high school assessment results in RCW 28A.655.070(3)(b) and to review transcripts, assess progress toward identified goals, and revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs. The plan must identify available interventions and academic support, courses, or both, that are designed for students who are not on track to graduate, to enable them to fulfill high school graduation requirements. Each student's high school and beyond plan must be updated to inform junior year course taking.

(B) For students with an individualized education program, the high school and beyond plan must be updated in alignment with their school to postschool transition plan. The high school and beyond plan must be updated in a similar manner and with similar school personnel as for all other students.

(iv) School districts are encouraged to involve parents and guardians in the process of developing and updating the high school and beyond plan, and the plan must be provided to the students' parents or guardians in their native language if that language is one of the two most frequently spoken non-English languages of students in the district. Nothing in this subsection (1)(c)(iv) prevents districts from providing high school and beyond plans to parents and guardians in additional languages that are not required by this subsection.

(v) All high school and beyond plans must, at a minimum, include the following elements:

(A) Identification of career goals, aided by a skills and interest assessment;

(B) Identification of educational goals;

(C) Identification of dual credit programs and the opportunities they create for students, including eligibility for automatic enrollment in advanced classes under RCW 28A.320.195, career and technical education programs, running start programs, AP courses, international baccalaureate programs, and college in the high school programs;

(D) Information about the college bound scholarship program established in chapter 28B.118 RCW;

(E) A four-year plan for course taking that:

(I) Includes information about options for satisfying state and local graduation requirements;

(II) Satisfies state and local graduation requirements;

(III) Aligns with the student's secondary and postsecondary goals, which can include education, training, and career;

(IV) Identifies course sequences to inform academic acceleration, as described in RCW 28A.320.195 that include dual credit courses or programs and are aligned with the student's goals; and

(V) Includes information about the college bound scholarship program;

(F) Evidence that the student has received the following information on federal and state financial aid programs that help pay for the costs of a postsecondary program:

(I) Information about the documentation necessary for completing the applications; application timeliness and submission deadlines; the importance of submitting applications early; information specific to students who are or have been in foster care; information specific to students who are, or are at risk of being, homeless; information specific to students whose family member or guardians will be required to provide financial and tax information necessary to complete applications; and

(II) Opportunities to participate in sessions that assist students and, when necessary, their family members or guardians, fill out financial aid applications; and

(G) By the end of the twelfth grade, a current resume or activity log that provides a written compilation of the student's education,

any work experience, and any community service and how the school district has recognized the community service pursuant to RCW 28A.320.193.

(d) Any decision on whether a student has met the state board's high school graduation requirements for a high school and beyond plan shall remain at the local level. Effective with the graduating class of 2015, the state board of education may not establish a requirement for students to complete a culminating project for graduation. A district may establish additional, local requirements for a high school and beyond plan to serve the needs and interests of its students and the purposes of this section.

(e)(i) The state board of education shall adopt rules to implement the career and college ready graduation requirement proposal adopted under board resolution on November 10, 2010, and revised on January 9, 2014, to take effect beginning with the graduating class of 2019 or as otherwise provided in this subsection (1)(e). The rules must include authorization for a school district to waive up to two credits for individual students based on a student's circumstances, provided that none of the waived credits are identified as mandatory core credits by the state board of education. School districts must adhere to written policies authorizing the waivers that must be adopted by each board of directors of a school district that grants diplomas. The rules must also provide that the content of the third credit of mathematics and the content of the third credit of science may be chosen by the student based on the student's interests and high school and beyond plan with agreement of the student's parent or guardian or agreement of the school counselor or principal. The limitations on the ability of a school district to grant waivers under this subsection (1)(e)(i) shall not apply in circumstances where a district is granted flexibility from state requirements under an emergency waiver program established in section 10 of this act.

(ii) School districts may apply to the state board of education for a waiver to implement the career and college ready graduation requirement proposal beginning with the graduating class of 2020 or 2021 instead of the graduating class of 2019. In the application, a school district must describe why the waiver is being requested, the specific impediments preventing timely implementation, and efforts that will be taken to achieve implementation with the graduating class proposed under the waiver. The state board of education shall

grant a waiver under this subsection (1)(e) to an applying school district at the next subsequent meeting of the board after receiving an application.

(iii) A school district must update the high school and beyond plans for each student who has not earned a score of level 3 or level 4 on the middle school mathematics assessment identified in RCW 28A.655.070 by ninth grade, to ensure that the student takes a mathematics course in both ninth and tenth grades. This course may include career and technical education equivalencies in mathematics adopted pursuant to RCW 28A.230.097.

(2)(a) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation requirements, the state board shall periodically reevaluate the graduation requirements and shall report such findings to the legislature in a timely manner as determined by the state board.

(b) The state board shall reevaluate the graduation requirements for students enrolled in vocationally intensive and rigorous career and technical education programs, particularly those programs that lead to a certificate or credential that is state or nationally recognized. The purpose of the evaluation is to ensure that students enrolled in these programs have sufficient opportunity to earn a certificate of academic achievement, complete the program and earn the program's certificate or credential, and complete other state and local graduation requirements.

(c) The state board shall forward any proposed changes to the high school graduation requirements to the education committees of the legislature for review. The legislature shall have the opportunity to act during a regular legislative session before the changes are adopted through administrative rule by the state board. Changes that have a fiscal impact on school districts, as identified by a fiscal analysis prepared by the office of the superintendent of public instruction, shall take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the legislature through the omnibus appropriations act or other enacted legislation.

(3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other than English established by the state board of education or a local school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation, students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or more American Indian languages shall be considered

to have satisfied the state or local school district graduation requirement for instruction in one or more languages other than English.

(4) Unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's family, a student who has completed high school courses before attending high school shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling high school graduation requirements if:

(a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing the same course requirements and examinations as the high school students enrolled in the class; or

(b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school district board of directors.

(5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform any other additional assignment to receive credit.

(6) At the college or university level, five quarter or three semester hours equals one high school credit.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 12.** Section 11 of this act expires July 31, 2020.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 13.** If any part of this act is found to be in conflict with federal requirements that are a prescribed condition to the allocation of federal funds to the state or the eligibility of employers in this state for federal unemployment tax credits, the conflicting part of this act is inoperative solely to the extent of the conflict, and this finding or determination does not affect the operation of the remainder of this act. Rules adopted under this act must meet federal requirements that are a necessary condition to the receipt of federal funds by the state or the granting of federal unemployment tax credits to employers in this state.

NEW SECTION. **Sec. 14.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately.

Passed by the House March 12, 2020.
Passed by the Senate March 12, 2020.
Approved by the Governor March 17, 2020.
Filed in Office of Secretary of State March 17, 2020.

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