



HB 1375 & HB 1702

Notification to Students Regarding Textbook Costs

April 3, 2024

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Introduction

HB 1375 and HB 1702 both address a significant, but often overlooked, factor in the cost of higher education – the cost of textbooks.

Approved by the Legislature in 2017, HB 1375 (RCW 28B.50.789) requires community and technical colleges to provide students, upon registration, cost information for required course materials. Colleges may include the information in their online course descriptions or provide links to their bookstores' websites. All 34 Washington community and technical colleges are complying with HB 1375 by providing links to their college bookstores in the textbooks section of class search results.

HB 1375 also requires each college to report which courses use open educational resources (OER). In 2020, the Legislature went one step further by passing HB 1702, which requires colleges to also identify which courses use low-cost course materials.

While similarly named, there is a distinction between OER and low-cost course materials. OER refers to free materials that are openly licensed for anyone in the world to use or modify, without fear of a copyright violation. Low-cost course materials are materials that cost \$50 or less.

To help colleges comply with HB 1375 and HB 1702, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) created [policies and tools to help colleges identify whether courses should be labeled as OER or low-cost course materials](#). Additionally, SBCTC created ways for colleges to tag and label courses appropriately within “ctcLink,” which is PeopleSoft software configured for Washington’s community and technical college system. All community and technical colleges enter and share data through ctcLink, which allows SBCTC to gather data about cost savings associated with OER and low-cost course materials.

This report provides a summary of the community and technical college system’s progress in achieving the vision behind HB 1375 and HB 1702, which is to help students make informed, cost-conscious decisions when registering for classes.

Outcomes and Student Savings

According to data provided by the SBCTC's data services department, Washington’s community and technical colleges have been actively implementing OER and low-cost labeling policies, assisting our students in making informed choices at the time of registration. As a result, students have saved a significant amount of money on textbook costs.

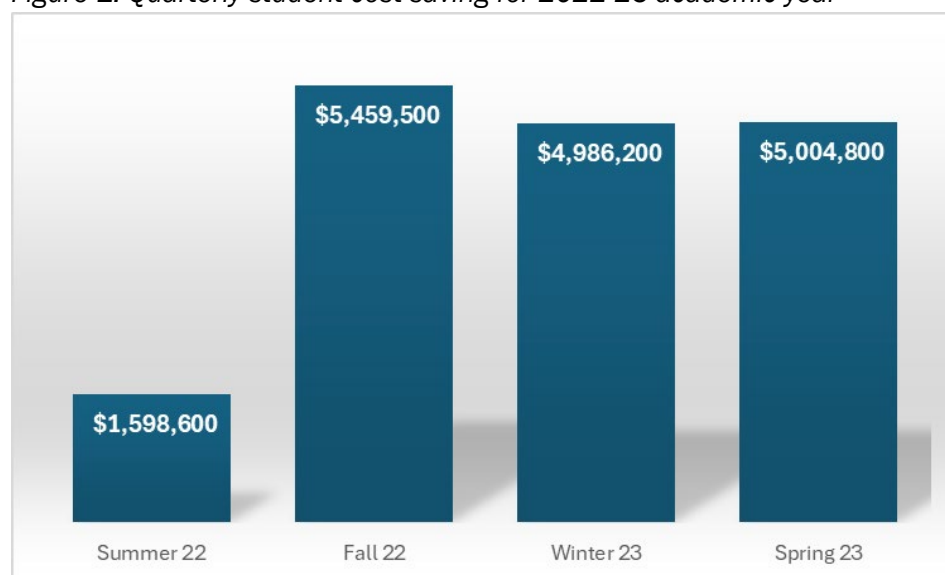
2022-23 academic year

During the four quarters of the 2022-23 academic year (summer 2022, fall 2022, winter 2023, and spring 2023), a total of 8,629 class sections were labeled as OER courses enrolling 101,186 students. Additionally, 6,290 class sections were labeled as using low-cost materials enrolling 69,305 students. It is estimated that the total savings for students amounted to \$17,049,100 for the 2022-23 academic year. See Table 1 and Figure 1 for a quarterly breakdown of the data.

Table 1. Number of class sections and students enrolled for 2022-23 academic year

Quarter	Summer 22	Fall 22	Winter 23	Spring 23
OER class	868	2,514	2,615	2,632
Enrollment in OER class	9,028	32,127	30,506	29,525
Low-cost class	708	1,981	1,735	1,866
Enrollment in low-cost class	6,958	22,468	19,356	20,523
Quarterly saving	\$1,598,600	\$5,459,500	\$4,986,200	\$5,004,800

Figure 1. Quarterly student cost saving for 2022-23 academic year



2023-24 academic year

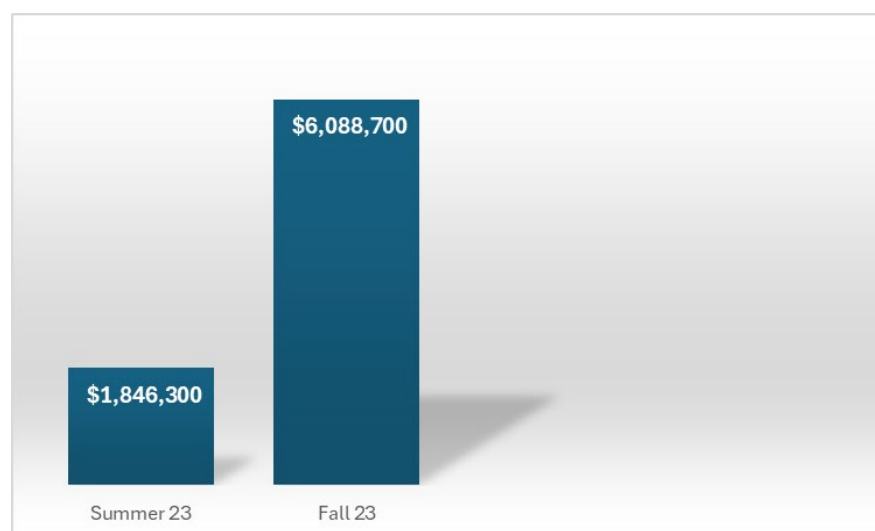
Students continued to save money on textbook costs in the 2023-24 academic year, which was still underway at the time of this report. During the first two quarters* of the 2023-24 academic year (summer 2023 and fall 2023), a total of 4,115 class sections were labeled as OER courses enrolling 48,550 students. Additionally, 2,834 class sections were labeled as using low-cost materials enrolling 30,800 students. It is estimated that the total savings for students amount to \$7,935,000 for the summer and fall quarters of the 2023-24 academic year. See Table 2 and Figure 2 for the quarterly breakdown of the data.

*As of April 2, 2024, only summer 2023 and fall 2023 data are available.

Table 2. Number of class sections and students enrolled for 2023-24 (partial data)

Quarter	Summer 23	Fall 23
OER class	1,130	2,985
Enrollment in OER class	11,730	36,820
Low-cost class	737	2,097
Enrollment in low-cost class	6,733	24,067
Quarterly saving	\$1,846,300	\$6,088,700

Figure 2. Quarterly student cost saving for 2023-24 (partial data)



State Board Coding Manual Additions

SBCTC’s coding manuals ensure colleges assign consistent and accurate codes to courses in ctcLink. Courses that use open educational resources are coded as “SOER” and courses that use low-cost course materials are coded as “SLCM.” The definition and criteria required for these codes are specified in the [Implementation Guide of OER and Low-Cost Labeling Policies for Washington Community and Technical Colleges](#).

Conclusion

Washington's 34 community and technical colleges have collaborated to establish an effective mechanism for implementing HB 1374 and HB 1702. This comprehensive framework ensures that community and technical college students can make financially informed choices at the time of registration by knowing which courses offer no-cost (OER) or low-cost textbooks and course materials.

SBCTC's coding manual provides colleges with clear instructions on policy implementation.

Our college system's commitment to textbook affordability goes beyond mere compliance; it demonstrates dedication to equipping students with essential information to make informed financial decisions about their education.

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