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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part of the legislative instrument, were prepared by Senate Legislative Services. The keyword, summary, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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DIGEST

SB 304 Original 2026 Regular Session Edmonds

Present law provides that public colleges and universities are to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

Proposed law provides that a public college or university may seek a new accreditor for the institution or may seek a new accreditor for a specialized program or unit so long as the selection of an accreditor and the process of seeking accreditation complies with proposed law.

Proposed law provides that, in coordination with each higher education management board, the Bd. of Regents has the power to set policy regarding accreditation of colleges and universities and set policy for specialized accreditation of any individual program or unit at a public college or university. Proposed law provides that Bd. of Regents is to adopt policies to allow colleges and universities, subject to the approval of their higher education management board, to seek a new institutional accreditor from a list of accreditors recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education or to seek a new specialized accreditor from a list of specialized accreditors maintained by the Bd. of Regents.

Proposed law provides that, if a college or university seeks a new accreditor, then the institution is to apply for approval with their institution's higher education management board. Proposed law further provides that any new accreditor must:

- (1) Promote credential success and workforce outcomes.
- (2) Promote educational quality and affordability.
- (3) Promote financial stability of the public postsecondary institutions.
- (4) Ensure appropriate accountability through a rigorous annual review of the faculty.

Proposed law provides that the higher education management board may not approve a new accreditor unless the accreditor meets the standards set in proposed law.

Proposed law provides that, if a college or university seeks a new accreditor, the management board is to coordinate with the Bd. to do all that is necessary to gain or maintain accreditation and update the public on the college or university's website as to the progress of accreditation with a new accreditor.

Proposed law requires that no accreditor may be chosen that conditions accreditation upon any

violation of the La. Constitution or any state law.

Proposed law changes accreditation references in present law from "Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges" to "an accreditor recognized by the U.S. Dept. of Education".

Effective upon signature of the governor or lapse of time for gubernatorial action.

(Add R.S. 17:3125.1, and 3171-3176)