

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2285

As Reported by House Committee On: Higher Education

Title: An act relating to reviewing institution of higher education policies related to dual credit coursework.

Brief Description: Requiring a review of institution of higher education policies related to dual credit coursework.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Dahlquist, Haigh, Magendanz, Lytton, Stonier, Santos, Bergquist, Seaquist, Zeiger, Ryu, Carlyle and Pollet.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/22/14, 1/29/14 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) to review institution policies related to providing students dual credit.
- Requires the WSAC to make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the steps that should be taken to improve the practices of these institutions.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Gregerson, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Muri, Reykdal, Sawyer, Scott, Sells, Smith, Tarleton, Walkinshaw, Walsh and Wylie.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

There are a number of programs that provide high school students the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit. For example:

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- Advanced Placement (AP) courses are recognized by the College Board as having college-level curricula. If students achieve a certain score on the AP course exam, most higher education institutions will award college credit.
- International Baccalaureate (IB) is a series of academically rigorous courses, activities, and examinations. Students may take individual courses, or attempt to complete an IB diploma based on the full program. Like the AP, college credit is based on exam scores.
- The Cambridge Program is similar to the IB in offering an internationally recognized rigorous set of courses and examinations.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) is a state agency that provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in the state of Washington.

Summary of Bill:

The WSAC must review policies related to providing students college credit for dual credit courses, including: the AP, the IB, and the Cambridge Program.

The review must identify:

- the major policy differences in awarding dual credit among institutions of higher education;
- best practices in awarding dual credit; and
- whether each institutions' policies apply equally to all dual credit programs.

By December 1, 2014, the WSAC must make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the steps that should be taken to improve the practices of the higher education institutions.

This section expires August 1, 2015.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) There are some concerns about whether colleges recognize the work the IB students are doing. It is unknown how schools are recognizing the IB and other dual credit programs. If students think their work is not recognized in colleges within Washington, then they may leave the state. We want to keep talented students in-state. Some colleges implemented an AP program policy in the Spring of 2000. Similar policies were put in place

for the IB last year. Cambridge programs are only available in two high schools in the state. Technical colleges do not usually have a course match with the dual credit courses due to the lack of academic classes. This bill is dedicated to providing rigor and multiple pathways for students. Dual credit is important because many students cannot afford a long-term higher education program. Dual credit programs decrease student costs. This consideration is really in line with academic acceleration policies implemented last year. Communicating with accuracy and transparency is critical. Currently, there is no law that says colleges and universities must accept certain dual credits. It would be better if policies were aligned. The WSAC submitted the Ten-Year Roadmap for increasing educational achievement. The Ten-Year Roadmap is a high-level, long-term strategic plan for increasing attainment and it includes 12 overarching strategies, including expanding dual credit and enrollment programs. The tasks for the WSAC in this bill dovetail nicely with work already planned on dual credit and enrollment programs. It is the review of best practices that will incur the additional cost to the WSAC.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Orwall, prime sponsor; Scott Copeland, Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Charlie Brown, Tacoma Public Schools; and Rebecca Kenna-Schenk, Washington Student Achievement Council.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.