

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2274

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to the granting of high school course credit.

Brief Description: Establishing credit equivalencies for high school students attending institutions of higher education.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Carlson, R. Meyers, Brough, Basich, Karahalios, Peery, Kessler, Eide, L. Johnson, Linville, Shin, Hansen, Talcott, Long, Van Luven, Cooke, Veloria, Scott, Johanson, Finkbeiner, Dunshee, Schoesler, Mastin, Pruitt, Wineberry, King, Conway, Kremen, Springer and H. Myers).

Brief History:

Reported by House Committee on:
Education, February 3, 1994, DPS;
Passed House, February 9, 1994, 81-13;
Amended by Senate;
House concurred;
Passed Legislature, March 6, 1994, 80-7.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 13 members: Representatives Dorn, Chair; Cothorn, Vice Chair; B. Thomas, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Carlson; Eide; Hansen; Karahalios; J. Kohl; Patterson; Pruitt; Roland; Stevens and L. Thomas.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Brough, Ranking Minority Member; Brumsickle; G. Cole; Holm and Jones.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: The Legislature has instructed the state Board of Education (SBE) to establish minimum high school graduation requirements or equivalencies. In response to this directive, the state board adopted a definition of high school credits in 1984. The definition was modified in November 1993.

Prior to the change in November 1993, five college quarter hour credits equaled a high school credit, which is equal to a 180-day high school class. The new rule states that five college quarter hours equal .75 of a high school credit.

Under the new rule, a high school student who attends college full-time will earn 6.75 high school credits annually, compared to nine high school credits prior to the rule change. A regularly enrolled high school student earns six high school credits annually.

Summary of Bill: The SBE agrees to delay implementation of its rule establishing course equivalencies until September 1995.

By May 1, 1994, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) and the SBE will convene a task force for ongoing discussions of curriculum issues that transect higher education and the common schools. The task force encourages various education entities to provide each other with advice and counsel as rules and policies are adopted that have implications for students in all sectors.

By December 30, 1994, the HECB and the SBE will report their recommendations on credit equivalencies to the House and Senate Education and Higher Education Committees.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Testimony For: (Original bill): The SBE rule on high school credit equivalency puts a barrier in the way of students moving smoothly through the education system. It also removes some of the incentive to participate in the Running Start program.

Testimony Against: (Original Bill): The decision to modify the credit equivalency was made by SBE after 18 months of extensive review and debate. All voices were heard. This is micromanagement of an issue best resolved without legislative action.

Witnesses: Representative Ogden (Prime Sponsor); Representative Quall (sponsor); Representative Carlson (sponsor); Kathleen Anderson, state Board of Education (con); Barbara Mertins, Superintendent of Public Instruction (con); Hugh Walkup, Higher Education Coordinating Board (pro); Ron Crossland, state Board for Community and Technical Colleges (pro); Tim Washburn, University of Washington (pro); Brian Barker, Association of Washington

School Principals (con); Jim Martin, Battle Ground School District (pro); Tana Hasart, Clark College (pro); and Adrian Clark, student (pro).