

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6438

AS PASSED SENATE, FEBRUARY 10, 1994

Brief Description: Allowing four-year institutions of higher education to accept students in the running start program.

SPONSORS: Senators Bauer, Hochstatter, Deccio, Sutherland, Drew, McAuliffe, Oke and Winsley

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bauer, Chairman; Drew, Vice Chairman; Prince, Sheldon and West.

Staff: Jean Six (786-7423)

Hearing Dates: January 31, 1994; February 2, 1994

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

BACKGROUND:

The Running Start program provides an opportunity for qualified eleventh and twelfth grade high school students to enroll in community and technical colleges to satisfy high school graduation requirements as well as earn college credit. In 1990 the Legislature authorized the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to operate Running Start programs at five pilot sites. All community and technical colleges were required to offer Running Start beginning fall of 1992.

During 1992-93, the first year of statewide implementation, approximately 3,500 annual unduplicated high school students enrolled in Washington community and technical colleges under the program. 1993 fall quarter enrollments show 3,986 headcount enrollment, producing approximately 2,614 full-time equivalent students. The average Running Start student, as measured by grade point average, continues to perform at least as well as the average entering community or technical college students.

The 1993 Legislature approved joint recommendations from the Running Start Task Force, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SBCTC which include a standard statewide reimbursement rate for all Running Start students and an increase in overhead from 5 to 7 percent to be retained by the sending high school. The increase in overhead is intended to be used to improve counseling services at the high school for program participants.

The State Board of Education recently changed the method by which college credit is applied to high school graduation requirements. The new rule states five quarter hours or three semester hours of college or university work equals .75 of a high school credit. Under the new rule, effective fall quarter of 1994, a Running Start student who attends college full-time will earn 6.75 high school credits annually, compared with 6.0 credits earned by regularly enrolled high school students.

Not all high school students in Washington have access to a community or technical college, yet would like access to the Running Start program.

SUMMARY:

Public institutions of higher education offering baccalaureate degrees may participate in the Running Start program. This option may provide access to students in geographical areas not served by a community or technical college.

Appropriation: none

Revenue: none

Fiscal Note: requested January 24, 1994

TESTIMONY FOR:

We would participate in the Running Start Program. It is a matter of access to college courses for the high school students in our communities. We support the opportunity the program provides for students to quickly earn a college degree.

TESTIMONY AGAINST: None

TESTIFIED: George Durrie, EWU; Don Schliesman, CWU

HOUSE AMENDMENT(S):

The option to participate in the Running Start Program is limited to Central Washington University. Technical changes to language are included.