

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESSB 6559

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to notification of the availability of programs leading to college credit.

Brief Description: Notifying parents of school programs leading to college credit.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Senators Kohl-Welles, Swecker, McAuliffe, Finkbeiner, Eide, Hochstatter, Bauer, Zarelli, Goings, Rasmussen, Oke, Winsley and Roach).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/23/00, 2/24/00 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

(As Amended by House Committee)

- Beginning with the next school year, schools must annually provide to ninth through twelfth grade students and their parents, information concerning locally available programs that allow high school students to earn college credit.
- The types of programs that will be included in the report are listed.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Democratic Co-Chair; Haigh, Democratic Vice Chair; Carlson; Keiser; Rockefeller; Santos; D. Schmidt; Schual-Berke and Stensen.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Cox; Thomas and Wensman.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

There are five programs currently offered in Washington schools in which a high school student may earn college credit: Advance Placement, College in the High School, International Baccalaureate, Tech-Prep, and Running Start. There are also a few highly selective programs that permit high school students to enroll in public baccalaureate institutions on a full-time or part-time basis.

Currently there is no statutory requirement that high schools notify parents of programs that lead to college credit. There are joint rules adopted by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board that require school districts to annually provide information on the Running Start program to 10th and 11th grade students and their parents.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Beginning with the 2000-01 school year, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must notify high schools and other schools that include ninth grade, of entities offering programs leading to college credit, if the superintendent has knowledge of such entities and if the cost of reporting these entities is minimal. Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, schools must annually publish and deliver to parents of ninth through 12th grade students, information concerning the entrance requirements and availability of programs leading to college credit offered in the local area. Some of the types of programs that must be included in the report, are listed. The published information must also include information on other public or private entities offering such programs if the school has knowledge of those entities. The information must be mailed to parents, but may also be included in other information routinely mailed to parents.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Substitute Bill: Information will be provided to ninth through 12th grade students and their parents, not just to high school students and their parents. The information will include college classes available in the local area, not just in the high school. The types of programs to be included are listed. The information must be mailed to parents, but may also be included in other information routinely mailed to parents. The language giving schools the option of not reporting the information is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: About 61 percent of Washington high schools offer advanced placement classes. The fewest advanced placement opportunities are available in rural areas. In proportion to the student population, the state's urban areas also have a lower than average enrollment in advanced placement classes. Since the passage of Initiative 200, colleges have experienced a decline in the number of freshman who are students of color. The situation is exacerbated by a lower than would be expected enrollment of these students in high school advanced placement classes and other classes that permit high school students to earn college credits. One of the reasons that enrollment levels are low in advanced placement classes is because students and their parents are not informed about the opportunities available to earn college credit while in high school. This legislation would help ensure that parents are informed about these opportunities. A number of states, including Louisiana, Missouri, and Virginia, have passed similar laws to improve communication between parents and schools.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: (In support) Senator Kohl-Welles, prime sponsor; Phyllis Beaumonte, Education Chairman, NAACP; Bryan Barnett, Apex Learning, Inc.; Greg Williamson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.