

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1061

C 128 L 03

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Authorizing associate degree pathways for persons in apprenticeship programs at community and technical colleges.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Veloria, Kenney, Conway, Cox, Hunt, Clements, Morrell, Campbell, Kessler, Simpson, Wood and Berkey).

House Committee on Higher Education
Senate Committee on Higher Education

Background:

Apprenticeship Programs. Apprenticeship programs enable individuals to learn trades and occupations through a combination of on-the-job training and related and supplemental instruction. Programs are sponsored by joint employer and labor groups, individual employers, or employer associations. Sponsoring groups make up the apprenticeship committee that oversees the program. The end product of an apprenticeship is a certificate of journey status, a nationally recognized standard within the specific occupational field of the apprentice.

Community and Technical Colleges. Most apprenticeship committees contract with a community or technical college to provide the program's related and supplemental instruction. For the 2001-02 academic year, 24 community and technical colleges provided instruction for nearly 12,000 apprentices (about 2,600 full-time equivalent students).

Associate Degrees. Fourteen colleges have created agreements within the college that allow apprentices to count portions of their related and supplemental instruction toward a special associate degree. Four of the largest programs offer a Multi-Occupational Trades Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree for apprentices in the trades. Once the student reaches journey status, only a few additional courses (usually in general education such as English, writing, or college-level math) are needed to receive the AAS. The number of additional courses may vary according to the level of rigor within the apprenticeship program, and the degree is specific to the apprentice's particular trade.

Ten colleges only offer a special associate degree for apprentices in certain fields (usually for educational paraprofessionals). The remaining 10 colleges with apprenticeship programs do not have an associate degree pathway specifically for apprentices.

Summary:

An apprenticeship committee can recommend to its community or technical college partner that an associate degree pathway be developed for the committee's apprenticeship program. In consultation with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), the committee and the college will consider the extent that apprentices in the program are likely to pursue a degree. If the committee and college determine that an associate degree pathway would be beneficial for apprentices, the committee can request that the college develop one.

After receiving such a request and if the necessary resources are available, the college will develop an associate degree program for apprentices. The college will ensure to the extent possible that related and supplemental instruction provided within the apprenticeship program is credited toward the degree and that other degree requirements are not redundant.

The SBCTC will convene a work group to examine current laws and rules pertaining to instruction for apprentices. The objective is to reduce barriers for apprentices to earn associate degrees. Topics to be examined include use of graded versus ungraded courses and tuition waivers for apprenticeship courses. A report is due to the Legislature by December 15, 2003.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 92 0
Senate 48 0 (Senate amended)
House 97 0 (House concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2003