

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SB 6561

As Passed House - Amended:

March 3, 2004

Title: An act relating to strengthening linkages between K-12 and higher education systems.

Brief Description: Strengthening linkages between K-12 and higher education systems.

Sponsors: By Senators Carlson, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/23/04, 2/26/04 [DPA].

Floor Activity:

Passed House - Amended: 3/3/04, 96-0.

Brief Summary of Bill (As Amended by House)

- Directs selected education and higher education agencies to expand, strengthen and create high school and college enrollment dual programs on high school campuses.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; McDermott, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Tom, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Cox, Haigh, Hunter, McMahan, Rockefeller and Santos.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

Dual Credit Programs

A variety of programs allow high school students to earn post secondary course credit while earning credit toward high school graduation. Examples include: Running Start, College in the High School, Tech Prep, advanced placement and International Baccalaureate. Students who participate in these dual enrollment programs have the opportunity to graduate from high school with all or a portion of their intended college course work already completed.

The dual enrollment programs generally take different forms and have different funding streams. In Tech Prep for example, students have had the option to take a set of courses that begin in high school and are completed in a community or technical college. In College in the High School, advanced placement, and International Baccalaureate programs, students may complete some college level work while staying on their high school campuses. Students must pay tuition to take College in the High School courses. In advanced placement classes, students take courses in high schools and may receive college credit if they pay for and pass a standardized examination at the end of the course. The colleges they attend determine the amount of credit they will receive for the advanced placement work. In most of these models, the students take classes in their high schools from high school teachers who have been permitted by the colleges to offer college level work since the teachers meet college teaching credentials.

Running Start is a somewhat different model. Through the program, students have an opportunity to study on a college campus while acquiring credits that count toward both high school and college graduation. The students take courses from college faculty and do not pay tuition for Running Start classes. If the student passes the college course, he or she receives the same amount of credit as any other student taking the course. The state provides funding that covers the amount of time the students spend in either high school or college. School districts retain 7 percent of the amount that would otherwise be provided to colleges for the districts' counseling and administrative expenses.

Statutory Task Force for Discussing Curriculum Issues that Transect Education and Higher Education

The 1994 Legislature directed the State Board of Education and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) to convene a task force that would act as a forum for ongoing discussion of curriculum issues that transect K-12 and higher education. The first issue that the taskforce was asked to tackle was the issue of how to award appropriate K-12 credit to Running Start courses. In addition, the taskforce was asked to be a vehicle for ongoing discussion about three other issues, including articulation agreements between high schools and institutions of higher education; options for students to enroll in programs and institutions that will best fit those students' needs; and a way to appropriately award high school and college credit for skills and knowledge learned in a variety of ways. The task force was successful in finding a way to ensure that all school districts and institutions of higher education had a common understanding of the appropriate amount of K-12 credit to be awarded for completed Running Start courses.

Summary of Amended Bill:

A group representing various state agencies and educators will strengthen, expand, and create dual enrollment programs available on high school campuses by removing barriers that inhibit the availability of such programs, and by creating incentives for offering these programs. The new opportunities are not intended to reduce dual enrollment opportunities on college

campuses. The group includes: the HECB, the Council of Presidents, the State Board for Community and Technical College, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and representatives of secondary schools principals and school superintendents.

By December 15, 2004, the group will report to the Legislative Education and Higher Education Committees on actions taken to reduce barriers and create incentives. The report will include recommendations on the actions the Legislature should take to encourage the availability of dual enrollment programs on high school campuses.

The legislation expires on December 31, 2004.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: The education and higher education communities should focus on the needs of students as individuals and spend more time cooperating with each other. This legislation will help them focus their efforts in one area: creating more opportunities for students to take college level work on high school campuses. Running Start is a wonderful option for students, but the different calendars and schedules of high schools and community colleges make it difficult for students to coordinate their college and high school classes. Creating additional college classes in high school will help overcome those scheduling challenges. It may also be a more developmentally appropriate setting than college for those high school students who are capable of college level work but who are socially immature.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: Senator Carlson, prime sponsor; Wes Pruit, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; Brian Jefferies, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Rainer Houser, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.