

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6561

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As Passed Senate, February 16, 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:** Senators Carlson, McAuliffe and Kohl-Welles.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education: 1/29/04 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/16/04, 48-0.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Carlson, Chair; Schmidt, Vice Chair; Kohl-Welles, Pflug, B. Sheldon and Shin.

**Staff:** Jean Six (786-7423)

**Background:** Research suggests that students are well-served by an education system that blurs the boundaries between the K-12 system and the higher education system. The term "seamless education system" has been used for a number of years. Because research also shows that citizens need more than a high school education to be successful in the economic climate of today, some believe it is imperative for students to have access to a variety of postsecondary options while still in high school.

Washington has a number of options for students still in high school that allow them to earn both high school and college credits concurrently. The existing dual credit programs include, but are not limited to, Running Start, Tech-Prep, College in the High School, Advanced Placement, and International Baccalaureate.

**Summary of Bill:** The State Board of Education, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Council of Presidents, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction are instructed to expand and strengthen dual enrollment programs by removing barriers and creating incentives. They will continue to examine the use of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) as a factor in both college admissions and college placement.

By December 15, 2004, the group reports to the education and higher education committees of the Legislature on actions taken to eliminate barriers and create incentives. The report includes actions for the Legislature to take to encourage the availability of dual enrollment and programs on high school campuses.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Testimony For:** Strengthening dual enrollments in programs including Running Start and the others that are available in the high school will meet the needs of students and help with the higher education access problem.

SPI is extremely supportive of this bill. A rigorous course of study in high school leads to success in postsecondary education. Participation in the Running Start option is leveling off, maybe because high school students want to remain in the high school setting. The groups have already been working together and can deliver the report at an earlier date, in the fall.

The issue of funding and faculty quality is sometimes discussed among the K-12 and higher education partners. International Baccalaureate demonstrates what can be done in a quality way.

The HECB Strategic Master Plan does emphasize dual credit programs, strengthening opportunities for high school students.

The 1994 JAG report is cogent and applicable today, according to the SBE.

SBCTC supports education reform and already are studying how the WASL applies to college admissions and Running Start. College in the High School Guidelines are being reviewed.

Principals acknowledge the shifting educational ground. The bell curve is no longer of value. This expands access, equity, and opportunity.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Don Carlson, prime sponsor; Bruce Botka, HECB; Larry Davis, SBE; Brian Jeffries, OSPI; Cynthia Morana, COP; Bill Moore, SBCTC; Bob McMullen, AWSP.

**House Amendment(s):** Representatives from secondary school principals and school district superintendents, and the WTECB are added to the group directed to expand dual enrollment programs. The expansion of dual enrollment programs on high school campuses is not intended to reduce dual enrollment programs on college campuses. The provision directing the group to examine the feasibility of using the Washington Assessment of Student Learning as a factor for admissions and placement at higher education institutions is removed.