

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6437

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education, January 25, 2006

Title: An act relating to course equivalencies for career and technical coursework for high school students.

Brief Description: Providing for adoption of course equivalencies for career and technical courses.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Rockefeller, Schmidt, Eide, Keiser, Schoesler, Fraser, Kohl-Welles, Weinstein, Pridemore, Rasmussen and Shin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education: 1/18/06, 1/25/06 [DPS].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING, K-12 & HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6437 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Pridemore, Vice Chair, Higher Education; Weinstein, Vice Chair, Early Learning & K-12; Schmidt, Ranking Minority Member; Berkey, Carrell, Delvin, Eide, Kohl-Welles, Pflug, Rasmussen, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Shin.

Staff: Stephanie Yurcisin (786-7438)

Background: The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HEC Board) establishes minimum admission standards for the four-year universities and colleges. The institutions may require additional courses for their own admissions purposes. The HEC Board's standards do not apply to students entering a community college.

In 1991, the Legislature created a task force convened by the HEC Board, the State Board of Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The purpose of the task force was to recommend a process for evaluating and accepting a student's high school coursework for the purposes of college or university entrance. The resulting recommendation was adopted as policy by the HEC Board and remains in place today; however, it was never placed in state statute.

Summary of Substitute Bill: Each high school or school district board of directors must adopt course equivalencies for career and technical courses offered to students at the high school. The equivalency may be for whole or partial credit. Each school district board of directors must develop an approval procedure for course equivalency.

Career and technical courses that are determined to be equivalent to academic core courses must be accepted as meeting core requirements, including graduation requirements, if the

courses are transcribed on the student's transcript using the equivalent high school designation and title. The amount of credit must be recorded as appropriate.

A technical amendment is made to make clear that the State Board of Education is not responsible for establishing high school equivalencies for career and technical courses or for adopting rules to implement these requirements.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The substitute bill corrects a technical error by changing the inclusion of the course equivalency information from the student's diploma to the student's transcript.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

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

Testimony For: This bill supports ongoing work by OSPI regarding course equivalency and technical education that has been occurring for the past five years. It also supports the work of local school districts. Increasing and improving coordination between academic classes and career and technical classes is very important. Regardless of the venue in which these core academic skills are learned, the knowledge should be recognized. Many districts already do this, but it is not statewide; this bill should be enacted to ensure that the course equivalencies are adopted in each district.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Rod Duckworth, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Christie Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition; Gil Mendoza, Tacoma Schools; Madeline Thompson, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; John Aultman, New Market Skills Center; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.