

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 3129

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to support for online learning for high school students to earn college credit.

**Brief Description:** Regarding online learning programs for high school students to earn college credit.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Schmick, Anderson, Quall, Simpson and Ormsby.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 2/1/08, 2/4/08 [DPS].

### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to compile and post on its website information about online learning programs for high school students to earn college credit.
- Requires high schools to ensure that parents, students, teachers, and counselors have information about online learning programs, including the opportunity to enroll in the Running Start program online.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, Lias, Roach, Santos and Sullivan.

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

**Background:**

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Students who are juniors and seniors in high school have the option through the Running Start program to enroll at a local community college or participating four-year college or university in courses that will offer them both high school and college credit. Other dual credit opportunities may be available at the students' high schools, such as Advance Placement, International Baccalaureate, College in the High School, or Tech Prep.

Students who live in remote areas of the state or attend very small high schools may not have the same ease of access to dual credit programs as students in urban areas or large high schools. However, in 2006-07 more than 4,500 Running Start students were able to enroll in online courses through the community and technical college (CTC) system's WashingtonOnline consortium. WashingtonOnline is a virtual campus providing access to online courses and degree programs offered by colleges in the CTC system. School districts that are part of the Digital Learning Commons also have access to online dual credit courses, including through the University of Washington Online Extension.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), with assistance from the Digital Learning Commons and WashingtonOnline, must compile information about online learning programs for high school students to earn college credit and place the information on its website. Examples include links to purveyors of online learning programs; program comparisons; advantages and disadvantages of online learning; and other information to assist students, teachers, and counselors. Examples of online learning programs include Running Start, the Digital Learning Commons, the University of Washington Extension, WashingtonOnline, and other programs and providers that are qualified to offer courses for high school credit or offer courses that colleges and universities in Washington generally accept for credit.

High schools must ensure that teachers, counselors, parents, and students have information about online learning programs. High schools must also provide information to students and their parents about the opportunity to enroll online in Running Start.

### **Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

Examples are provided of the information about online learning programs that the OSPI is expected to compile. Other programs or providers of online learning to be included on the website must be qualified to offer courses for high school credit or courses generally accepted by colleges and universities in Washington.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) Distance learning is an extremely important way to increase access and availability of higher education, especially in rural areas. This is a first step to promote distance learning. The next step will be to enhance opportunities and access to distance learning. This bill acknowledges the benefits of online learning, including Running Start.

(In support with concerns) Not all online providers use certified teachers. The broad inclusion of "other" online providers is a concern. The OSPI already provides annual information on dual credit opportunities. The OSPI would like to fulfill its responsibility but it's not clear what is really expected.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Schmick, prime sponsor; and Cable Green, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

(In support with concerns) Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association; and Brian Jeffries, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.