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## Education Committee

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### HB 2852

**Brief Description:** Concerning college-level online learning by high school students.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Parker, Wallace and Schmick.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Brief Summary of Bill</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excludes public and accredited institutions of higher education from laws that regulate providers of online learning in K-12 schools.</li><li>• Authorizes school districts to claim basic education funding for students enrolled in college credit-bearing courses offered by these types of higher education institutions.</li></ul>
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**Hearing Date:** 1/26/10

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

**Background:**

Legislation enacted in 2009 established new state regulation of online learning in K-12 schools.

Approval of Providers.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must establish criteria and a process for approving "multi-district online providers". The first round of approval decisions must occur by April 2010. One of the criteria established in statute is that a provider must require all teachers to be certified under Washington laws.

A multi-district online provider is defined as:

- (1) a private or non-profit organization that enters into a contract with a school district to provide online courses or programs to K-12 students from more than one school district;
- (2) a private or nonprofit organization that enters into contracts with multiple school districts to provide online courses or programs to K-12 students from those districts; or

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(3) a school district that provides online courses or programs to students who reside outside the school district, but only if more than 10 percent of students in the program are from other districts.

Other school district online programs, including those operated by multiple school districts or Education Service Districts (ESDs) through an inter-district agreement, are not included in this definition and do not require approval.

Public colleges and universities that contract with a school district to offer online courses or programs do not meet the definition of multi-district online provider. However, private colleges and universities would be considered private or non-profit organizations, and to the extent they contract with school districts to provide online courses or programs to K-12 students in the manner described in law, they would be subject to approval as and would have to meet the criteria for a multi-district online provider.

#### Use of Basic Education Funding for Online Courses.

The 2009 legislation requires that, beginning with the 2011-12 school year, school districts can only claim basic education funding for students enrolled in online courses or programs if the provider is one of the following:

- (1) an approved multi-district online provider, as defined;
- (2) a school district providing the courses only to its own students or to students from multiple districts where fewer than 10 percent are from outside the district; or
- (3) a program offered by multiple districts or an ESD through an inter-district agreement.

Under these provisions, a school district could not use or claim basic education funding for a student enrolled in a public or private college or university online course because these entities do not fall within the list of allowable providers for this purpose unless they are approved as a multi-district online provider. Laws that provide for funding of students enrolled in college courses through Running Start, which may be offered online, are separate and not affected by these provisions.

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

The following entities are excluded from the definition of a multi-district online provider, but only if the online course or program they provide generates college credits:

- in-state public institutions of higher education; and
- in- or out-of-state institutions of higher education that are accredited by an accrediting association recognized by the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Beginning in 2011-12, school districts are authorized to claim basic education funding for students enrolled in college credit-bearing courses offered by one of these types of higher education institutions.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 19, 2010.

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