

SENATE BILL REPORT

SHB 1524

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, March 16, 2011

Title: An act relating to recognizing the international baccalaureate diploma.

Brief Description: Recognizing the international baccalaureate diploma.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representative Orwall).

Brief History: Passed House: 2/25/11, 82-16.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/09/11, 3/16/11 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Harper, Vice Chair; Litzow, Ranking Minority Member; Fain, Hill, Hobbs, King, Nelson, Rockefeller and Tom.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Graduation Requirements. The Legislature has delegated to the State Board of Education (SBE) the authority to establish state minimum high school graduation requirements that are in addition to the requirements to meet the state standards on the statewide assessments. The current SBE requirements are as follows:

- Earn 19 credits in specified course areas: 3 English; 2 Mathematics; 2 Science (1 lab); 2.5 Social Studies (includes study of the United States and Washington State Constitutions); 1 Arts; 2 Health and Fitness; 1 Occupational Education; and 5.5 Electives. Beginning with the graduating class of 2013, an additional mathematics credit will be required for a total of 20 credits.
- Complete a culminating project. The student must demonstrate both learning competencies and preparations related to learning goals three (problem solving) and four (understanding the importance of work and finance).
- Prepare a high school and beyond plan. A plan for the student's high school experience, including what the student expects to do the year following graduation.

Additionally, state law requires students to meet the state standard on the statewide reading and writing assessments, and take additional math classes if they do not meet the standard on the mathematics assessment. Beginning with the graduating class of 2013, students must

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meet the state standard on the statewide assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science for graduation.

School districts may establish other local graduation requirements. High school diplomas are issued by school districts to students who meet state and local graduation requirements.

International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD). The International Baccalaureate is a nonprofit educational foundation that has developed three programs of instruction that include curriculum, pedagogy, student assessments, professional development for teachers, and a process of school authorization and evaluation. Authorized schools must pay annual fees.

The IBD Programme is one of the three programs. It is a two-year curriculum for students ages 16 to 19 that includes six subject areas; an extended essay of 4000 words; a course in theory of knowledge, and a number of creativity, action, and service (CAS) projects. Students must complete internally and externally-scored assessments. To earn an IBD students must also pass end-of-course examinations in each of their six courses.

There are 16 Washington high schools approved to offer the IBD. More than 6600 Washington students enrolled in the IBD courses in 2009-10. However, not all students seek the full IBD. According to the International Baccalaureate Organization, 339 Washington students earned the IBD in 2008.

Summary of Bill: Students who successfully pass all the required IBD courses, projects, locally scored assessments, and the final examinations in the required subjects are considered to have satisfied state minimum requirements for graduation from a public high school, except that the students must still:

- meet the state standard on statewide assessments; and
- study the United States and Washington Constitutions as a prerequisite for graduation. However, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction may adopt a rule allowing the IBD students to meet the prerequisite through noncredit based study.

School districts may require the IBD students to complete additional local graduation requirements before issuing a high school diploma, but are encouraged to waive local requirements for students to pursue an IBD.

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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: IBD programs are growing in our state, and the number of students participating in the programs is increasing. This is a successful program for college preparation that is recognized by colleges in the nation. It allows students to stay at the high school and not have to enter into Running Start and leave the high school campus. This will increase the number of students who complete or at least

participate in the IBD Program. This bill asks for additional flexibility to provide an alternative pathway to a high school diploma and acknowledges the college-level rigor of the IBD Program. It is difficult for some students to complete both the IBD Program and the current high school graduation requirements, either because students must take remedial classes prior to entering the IBD Program, the cost limits the IBD classes they can take (it costs between \$700 and \$800 for the full IBD Program but those students on free and reduced lunch can get up to 90 percent of the cost subsidized), the student has other elective classes. There are redundancies between the IBD Program requirements and high school graduation requirements; but there are also learning requirements in the IBD Program that are not recognized by the high school graduation requirements, which creates scheduling issues for students who want to participate in the IBD Program. The IBD Program is not for a few but seeks to have diversity in the Program. Some other states have already started recognizing the IBD for high school graduation and several others are considering it.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Orwall, prime sponsor; Larry Pierce, Chief Sealth High School; Chris McQueen, Inglemoor High School; Nancy Anderson, Skyline High School; Bob Poole International Baccalaureate; Tamara Ok, Ingram High School.