
Education Committee

HB 2181

Brief Description: Authorizing and supporting career and college ready graduation requirements adopted by the state board of education.

Sponsors: Representatives Lytton, Dahlquist, Carlyle, Tharinger, Haigh and Magendanz.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the State Board of Education to adopt rules implementing the 24-credit Career and College Ready graduation requirements adopted by resolution on November 10, 2010, and revised on January 9, 2014, to take effect with the graduating class of 2019.
- Codifies a provision in the 2013-15 Omnibus Appropriations Act making an increase in instructional hours under Basic Education, to take effect in the 2014-15 school year.

Hearing Date: 1/23/14

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Graduation Requirements.

The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes minimum requirements for high school graduation through administrative rules. The current requirements are 20 credits among a specified distribution of subjects, a culminating project, and a High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP). Legislation enacted in 2009 requires school districts, as part of their Basic Education program, to provide students with the opportunity to complete 24 credits, based on courses specified by the SBE. The increase to 24 credits is to be phased-in according to a schedule adopted by the Legislature, which has not yet occurred.

In November 2010 the SBE proposed a Career and College Ready framework for the 24 credits. Changes in the minimum graduation requirements that are proposed by the SBE must be

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submitted to the Education Committees of the Legislature for review before they are adopted. Changes that are found to have a fiscal impact on school districts take effect only if formally authorized and funded by the Legislature.

In November 2011 the SBE adopted those changes that were found not to have a fiscal impact. As a result the following 20 credits are required effective with the graduating class of 2016:

- English: four credits.
- Mathematics: three credits.
- Science: two credits, including one in laboratory science.
- Social Studies: three credits, including one in U.S. History, .5 credits in Civics, and one in Contemporary World Problems.
- Health: .5 credits.
- Fitness: 1.5 credits.
- Occupational Education: one credit.
- Arts: one credit.
- Electives: four credits.

In January 2014 the SBE modified its Career and College Ready framework slightly, but must still wait for legislative authorization before adopting the following remaining components:

- An additional credit in laboratory science.
- An additional credit in the Arts.
- Two additional credits in World Languages.
- Clarification that Occupational Education includes career and technical education.

The SBE proposal allows the additional credits in the Arts and World Languages to be substituted as a personalized pathway based on the goals of individual students as expressed in their HSBP. The proposal also states that while students must attempt 24 credits, up to two credits may be waived by school districts if students need to retake courses to fulfill the core requirements.

Instructional Hours and Basic Education Funding Enhancements.

Legislation enacted in 2009 also requires school districts to increase minimum annual instructional hours under Basic Education, from a districtwide average of 1,000 hours to 1,000 hours in each of grades one through six and 1,080 hours in each of grades seven through 12. The increase is to be implemented according to a schedule adopted by the Legislature. The 2013-15 Omnibus Appropriations Act (Act) directs school districts to implement the increase beginning in the 2014-15 school year. The Act also contains supplemental funding for the increased instructional hours, as well as other funding enhancements to support the Basic Education program.

Summary of Bill:

The SBE is directed to adopt rules implementing the Career and College Ready graduation requirements adopted by resolution on November 10, 2010, and revised on January 9, 2014, to take effect with the graduating class of 2019. It is declared that funding allocated under the Act to support Basic Education constitutes the legislative funding needed to implement the change in graduation requirements.

The requirement for school districts to increase instructional hours under Basic Education beginning in the 2014-15 school year is codified in statute.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2014.

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