

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1642

As of March 27, 2013

Title: An act relating to establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.

Brief Description: Establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Pettigrew, Springer, Habib, Holy, Ryu and Magendanz).

Brief History: Passed House: 3/08/13, 85-12.

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/20/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Eric Wolf (786-7405)

Background: There are a number of different programs that provide high school students the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit. For example:

- Advanced Placement (AP) courses are recognized by the College Board as having a college-level curricula. Most colleges and universities award students college credit for achieving a certain score on the AP course exam.
- International Baccalaureate (IB) is a series of academically rigorous courses, activities, and examinations. Students may take individual courses, or attempt to complete an IB diploma based on the full program. Like AP, colleges and universities award credit based on exam scores.
- The Cambridge Program is similar to IB in offering an internationally recognized rigorous set of courses and examinations.
- College in the High School is a program in which a high school and a college or university enter a contract to have a course that is taught by a high school teacher generate college credit. Whether the student or the high school pays the tuition for the course depends on the contract.
- Tech Prep offers students the opportunity to apply to a community or technical college to have high school career and technical education (CTE) courses recognized for college credit.
- Running Start is a program where high school students may enroll in a participating public institution of higher education in Washington and earn both high school and

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.

college credit. For the most part, students attend class on the college campus. State funding is transferred from the high school to the college in lieu of tuition.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) posts information about dual credit program enrollment by school district and high school on the School Report Card website. The information does not indicate pass rates on program examinations.

The statewide assessment system measures whether a student meets the state learning standard in a particular subject area. High school students take state assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The state standard for mathematics is measured using an end-of-course test in algebra I and geometry. The standard for science is measured using an end-of-course test in biology. The reading and writing assessments are administered in grade ten.

Summary of Bill: Academic Acceleration Policy (Policy). Each school district is encouraged to adopt a Policy where students who meet the state standard on the high school state assessment are automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous advanced course offered by the high school. Students who are successful in that course are then automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous course, with the objective that these students will eventually be automatically enrolled in dual credit courses.

The subject of the course depends on the subject of the state assessment. Students must pass end-of-course tests in both algebra I and geometry to meet the standard in mathematics. Students who meet the standard in reading and writing qualify for advanced English, social studies, humanities, and other related courses.

Under the Policy, school districts must notify students and parents about the Policy, and must provide parents an opportunity to opt out and enroll the student in alternative courses.

Academic Acceleration Incentive Program. Subject to funding, the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program is created. Half of the appropriated funds are allocated on a competitive basis as one-time grants for high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses. To be eligible, a school district must have adopted a Policy. OSPI must give priority to high schools with a high proportion of low-income students and high schools seeking to develop new capacity for dual credit courses.

The other half of the appropriated funds are allocated as an incentive award to school districts for each student who earned dual credit in specified courses offered by a high school in the previous year. The amount of the award for low-income students is 125 percent of the base amount. Each student counts once, even if they earned more than one credit. The award must go to the high school that generated it. The Legislature intends that funds be used to support teacher training, curriculum, exam fees, and other costs of dual credit courses.

The award is based on the number of students who:

- earn a score of three or higher on an AP exam;
- earn a score of four or higher on an IB exam;

- successfully complete a Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education exam;
- earn college credit through a College in the High School course; or
- earn college credit through a Tech Prep course.

Online dual credit courses count as being offered by the high school if the high school offers them at no charge to the student. Enrollment in Running Start does not count toward an award.

OSPI must include information on dual credit exam pass rates and college credits awarded in the School Report Card.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 14, 2013.

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: Academic acceleration is a powerful concept, but the Senate companion to this bill is much stronger. It is critical that this policy be mandatory for districts to adopt. This bill will help minority students access higher-level classes. Districts can already adopt an academic acceleration policy if they want to, so making the policy optional defeats the purpose of the bill. We had conversations about this policy for decades, and now this program is shown to be effective at closing the opportunity gap. The Washington State School Directors Association supports the bill as written. The Federal Way program is a success, but the Tacoma School District supports the bill as written, with permissive language, because Tacoma should have flexibility to apply the policy.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Rosalund Jenkins, Black Education Strategy Roundtable, League of Education Voters; Dave Powell, Stand for Children; Anne Luce, Partnership for Learning, WA Roundtable; Marie Sullivan, WA State School Directors Assn.; Charlie Brown, Tacoma School District.