

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1642

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, 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, 3/27/13 [DPA-WM, w/oRec].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Litzow, Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Rolfes, Assistant Ranking Member; Billig, Brown, Cleveland, Fain, Hill, Mullet and Rivers.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator McAuliffe, Ranking Member.

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.

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 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 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 (Recommended Amendments): Academic Acceleration Policy. By September 1, 2013, each school district board must adopt an academic acceleration policy that automatically enrolls any student meeting the state standard on the high school statewide student assessment or a district-approved minimum score in any section of the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) in the next most rigorous level of advanced courses offered by the high school. Upon completion of that course, students must then enroll in the next most rigorous level of advanced course, with the objective that students will eventually automatically enroll in dual credit courses. The district must notify students and their parents or guardians of the academic acceleration policy, and provide the parents or guardians the opportunity to opt out of the program on behalf of the student.

Determination of Advanced Course Track. Students who meet the state standard on the high school statewide assessment or the district-approved minimum score on the PSAT section related to mathematics may enroll in advanced courses in mathematics. Students who meet the state standard on the high school statewide assessment on both the reading and writing assessments, or meet the PSAT sections for critical reading skills and writing skills, may enroll in advanced courses in English, social studies, humanities, and other related subjects.

Academic Acceleration Incentive Program (Program). The Program is established, subject to the appropriation of funding. Awards from the Program may be used to support teacher training, curriculum, technology, examination fees, and other costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students. OSPI will direct half of the appropriated funding for the award to schools in the bottom 25 percent of enrollment in dual credit classes for the purpose of encouraging higher enrollment. The remaining half of the appropriated funding

will be awarded to schools that finish in the top 10 percent of growth of enrollment in dual credit programs.

Collection of Data on Dual Credit Courses. The proposed legislation directs OSPI to post on the Washington State Report Card website the rates at which high school students earn college credit through dual credit courses.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): School districts must adopt an academic acceleration policy by September 1, 2013. Students who meet a minimum threshold score on the PSAT must to be enrolled in the academic acceleration program. Students are allowed to enroll in advanced mathematics and science courses by meeting a minimum score threshold on the PSAT mathematics section, or to enroll in advanced English, social studies, humanities, and other related subjects by meeting a minimum score threshold on the writing skills and critical reading skills sections of the PSAT. OSPI must direct half of the appropriated funding for the Program to schools in the bottom 25 percent of enrollment in dual credit classes for the purpose of encouraging higher enrollment, and direct the second half of the appropriated funding to schools that finish in the top 10 percent of growth in student enrollment in dual credit programs. CTE courses that result in a student receiving dual credit and Running Start programs resulting in dual credit are added to the list of courses considered dual credit for the purposes of the Program. A null and void clause that applies to the Program is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Second Substitute House Bill: 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.