

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 2285

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education, February 25, 2014

Title: An act relating to reviewing institution of higher education policies related to dual credit coursework.

Brief Description: Requiring a review of institution of higher education policies related to dual credit coursework.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Dahlquist, Haigh, Magendanz, Lytton, Stonier, Santos, Bergquist, Seaquist, Zeiger, Ryu, Carlyle and Pollet.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/11/14, 98-0.

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 2/20/14, 2/25/14 [DP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Bailey, Chair; Becker, Vice Chair; Kohl-Welles, Ranking Member; Frockt and Tom.

Staff: Kimberly Cushing (786-7421)

Background: A number of programs provide high school students the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit. For example, the Advance Placement (AP) program enables students to take rigorous college-level courses. The International Baccalaureate (IB) program allows students to take individual courses or study up to six courses to earn an IB diploma. Cambridge International Examinations provides an international, pre-university curriculum and examination system. For all three programs, students complete courses while still in high school and take standardized examinations at the end of each course. Whether college credit is awarded depends upon a student's score on the exam. Minimum scores to qualify for college credit vary by college and by subject area.

In 2011 the Legislature passed the Launch Year Act. Starting December 1, 2011, and biennially thereafter, institutions of higher education are directed to develop a master list of postsecondary courses that can be fulfilled by taking AP, IB, or other recognized college-level proficiency exams and achieving a qualifying score or meeting demonstrated competencies.

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.

Summary of Bill: The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) must review college credit policies for completion of dual credit courses, including AP, IB, and Cambridge. The review must identify the following:

- the major differences between institutions of higher education in awarding college credit for dual credit coursework;
- the best practices among institutions in awarding credit for dual credit courses; and
- whether the institutional crediting policies apply equally to each dual credit program.

By December 1, 2014, WSAC must make recommendations to the Legislature regarding the steps that should be taken to improve institutional practices for awarding college credit for dual credit coursework.

This section expires August 1, 2015.

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: PRO: Dual credit courses are rigorous and take a lot of time and require money. However, how many of these courses are recognized by institutions of higher education? Some families may leave the state to get credit for dual credit work at other institutions of higher education. The Tacoma School District is looking at how to get early college credits to help students offset the cost of college throughout the whole state public higher education system. It will take a process to get college credit for high school courses. The WSAC Roadmap for increasing educational attainment includes a strategy to streamline and expand dual credits and dual enrollment programs. WSAC's tasks in the bill dovetails nicely with work they are intending to do under the Roadmap, which includes convening a workgroup. The two-year colleges already have in place a policy for transferring AP and IB credits.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Orwall, prime sponsor; Charlie Brown, Tacoma Public Schools; Becca Kenna-Schenk, WSAC; Scott Copeland, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.