

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1445

As Reported by House Committee On: Higher Education

Title: An act relating to using computer sciences to satisfy world language college admission requirements.

Brief Description: Using computer sciences to satisfy world language college admission requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Reykdal and Magendanz.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 2/4/15, 2/18/15 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Student Achievement Council (Council) and an organization that represents the public four-year institutions to facilitate a conversation with the state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College about accepting two years of computer sciences in K-12 to count towards the world language college admission requirement for the public four-year institutions.
- Requires the Council to study what a world language competency-based assessment would need to include in order to count towards college admission requirements.
- Requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to study the implications of adding 10 minutes to the school day for grades 1 through 8 for the purpose of learning a world language.
- Requires both the Council and the OSPI to report their findings to the Legislature by November 1, 2017.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking

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Minority Member; Haler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Reykdal, Sells and Tarleton.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Gregory, Hargrove, Holy and Van Werven.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Stambaugh.

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

The Student Achievement Council (Council) has authority to set minimum college admission standards for the state's public four-year institutions. The minimum college admission standards include a 2.0 minimum grade point average, official SAT or ACT scores, and College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR) that all students must meet in order to qualify for admission into one of the state's public four-year institutions as a freshman. The CADR are a set of academic core requirements and represent the minimum number of credits required in six subject areas: English, mathematics, social sciences, world language, science, and the arts. These minimum admission requirements do not guarantee admission into a public four-year institution. Admission requirements differ for non-traditional students, such as transfer or adult students over the age of 25.

The CADR world language requirement for admissions into a public four-year institution is two credits (two years). This means that the student must complete two years devoted to a single language, one year of which was a second-year level course. Any natural language that was formally studied satisfies this requirement, including a Native American language, American Sign Language, Latin, or ancient Greek. Computer languages do not count towards this requirement.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Council and an organization that represents the public four-year institutions must facilitate a conversation with the state universities, regional universities, and The Evergreen State College about accepting two years of computer sciences to count towards two years of world language requirements for admission purposes into a four-year institution of higher education. In addition, the Council must study what a world language competency-based assessment would need to include to successfully measure a student's ability to proficiently read, write, and speak a world language. The assessment should be designed with the intention that high school students could meet CADR for admission purposes into the state universities, the regional universities, and The Evergreen State College via the assessment in lieu of the required two credits of world languages. The Council must report to the Legislature by November 1, 2017, regarding the curriculum, courses, and course sequencing necessary in the K-12 schools for computer sciences to count as a world language and the elements a world language competency-based assessment should have.

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must conduct a study to assess the implications of adding an additional 10 minutes of instruction time to the school day for grades 1 through 8 for the purpose of learning a world language. The study must address the following:

- the cost associated with additional instruction time;
- the impacts on teachers and districts;
- the benefits of introducing a world language at a younger age;
- the anticipated effects of requiring additional curriculum; and
- any other measure the OSPI deems appropriate.

The OSPI must submit a report to the Legislature by November 1, 2017.

The act expires July 1, 2018.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill removes the OSPI from the list of organizations required to facilitate a dialogue regarding college admission standards, and instead requires the OSPI to conduct their own study on adding additional instruction time to the school day. In addition, the substitute bill requires the Council to look at what elements a world language competency-based assessment would need to measure a student's proficiency in a world language for the purpose of testing out of the world language CADR.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Most students will never use the two years of world language they learn. Students can still learn culture without linguistics. The state spends \$100 million of tax payer dollars to teach world languages that people will never use. This bill just asks the universities to sit down and talk about what the courses, course sequencing, and curriculum would need to look like to allow computer science courses to count towards world language college admission requirements. This is a conversation about a narrow pathway for those students who do not think college is appropriate for them because they do not want to learn a world language.

(With concerns) Currently, undergraduate students can use an Advance Placement computer science course to count towards a math-based requirement. However, there is a difference between coding and languages. It makes sense to substitute a year of computer science with math, but not world languages. Computer programming is supported, but this would restrict

the interdisciplinary system, which is so strong. There are concerns about narrowing the focus to career preparation rather than career exploration. World languages teach students a different way of learning. It changes the way a student can see the world, and the Legislature should not replace one for the other. The Legislature should be strengthening the education system by encouraging students to take on a wider curriculum rather than a narrower one. Students need a broad education, not just technical expertise.

This bill may have unintended consequences. If the requirement for college admissions is changed in Washington, but national requirements stay the same, the competitiveness of Washington students on a national level will be reduced. Some institutions have additional world language requirements, so removing world language admission standards may increase time to degree. The state's universities are global, and students need to have literacy to deal with the world. The world language requirement is also about cultural competency.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representatives Reykdal, prime sponsor.

(With concerns) JoAnn Taricani, University of Washington; and Austin Wright-Pettibone, Associated Students of the University of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.