

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SHB 1031

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As of March 26, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to expanding participation in college in the high school programs.

**Brief Description:** Expanding participation in college in the high school programs.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Johnson, Santos, Haler, Appleton, Sells, S. Hunt, Gregerson, Reykdal, Bergquist, Van De Wege, Hargrove, Ormsby, Fey and Walkinshaw).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/02/15, 96-1.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/16/15.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Staff:** Matthew Lemon (786-7405)

**Background:** College in the High School (CHS). CHS programs are dual-credit programs in which school districts contract with institutions of higher education to offer college-level courses at high school campuses to qualified high school students. The programs are available to eleventh or twelfth grade students or students who have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in the eleventh or twelfth grades. The high school and the participating institution of higher education together must define the criteria for student eligibility and the institution of higher education may charge tuition fees to participating students. School districts participating in CHS must provide general information about the program to all students in grades ten through twelve and the parents or guardians of those students. In the 2013-14 school year, 147 high schools and over 17,000 students participated in CHS programs.

Course Credits and Requirements. A school district must grant high school credit to students who successfully complete a CHS course and the credit must be applied toward graduation requirements and subject area requirements. An institution of higher education must grant college credit to students who successfully complete the course and the credit must be applied toward general education requirements or major requirements. General education requirements are required courses for graduation and major requirements are required courses to complete study in an academic discipline. The Evergreen State College (TESC) does not have general education requirements or majors. Instead, students at TESC must fulfill degree requirements and have the option of designating an area of emphasis.

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*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:** Students in tenth grade or students who are eligible to be in the tenth grade may participate in CHS programs.

School districts participating in CHS must provide general information about the program to all students in grades nine through twelve and the parents or guardians of those students.

At TESC, CHS credit must apply toward degree requirements.

**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: The CHS program has been in existence for some time and schools and districts have indicated it should be expanded to tenth-grade students. Research shows that the best predictor of earning a baccalaureate degree is the intensity of the academic program in high school, and dual-credit programs are one of the best ways to increase college participation and degree production. Readiness for this level of rigorous coursework should be determined by ability rather than age and the state should remove the statutory barrier that prevents tenth-grade students who have demonstrated readiness from participating in the program. Some tenth-grade students are already taking these courses but are not able to receive the same college credit that their older peers receive. This would allow tenth-grade students to participate in a program that can build a college transcript and ensure that students are truly college ready.

Some CHS courses have been cancelled due to low enrollment and including-tenth grade students would help meet meet the minimum number of paying students needed to offer a course while also allowing students to work at their academic level. These programs allow students to earn credits at a much lower rate than undergraduates pay and are by far the cheapest way to earn college credit. This program can help lower the cost of college for both parents and the state.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Johnson, prime sponsor; Jene Jones, League of Education Voters; Michael Brophy, West Valley School District #208, Superintendent; Steve DuPont, Central WA University.

**Persons Signed in to Testify but Not Testifying:** No one.