

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## E2SHB 1546

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As Reported by Senate Committee On:  
Early Learning & K-12 Education, March 24, 2015

**Title:** An act relating to dual credit opportunities provided by Washington state's public institutions of higher education.

**Brief Description:** Concerning dual credit opportunities provided by Washington state's public institutions of higher education.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Reykdal, Pollet, Springer, Bergquist, S. Hunt, Lytton, Tarleton, Wylie and McBride; by request of Office of Financial Management).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/10/15, 53-45.

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 3/23/15, 3/24/15 [DPA-WM, w/oRec].

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### 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; McAuliffe, Ranking Member; Fain, Hill, Mullet, Rivers and Rolfes.

**Minority Report:** That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Billig.

**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 10–12 and the parents or guardians of

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those students. In the 2013-14 school year, 147 high schools and over 17,000 students participated in CHS programs.

Running Start (RS). RS is a dual-credit program in which eligible eleventh and twelfth grade students may enroll in courses or programs offered by participating institutions of higher education. Students take RS courses on the campus of the institution of higher education, online, and in their high schools. Participating institutions of higher education, in consultation with school districts, may establish admission standards for RS students. Typically, RS students do not pay tuition unless they exceed the 1.2 full-time equivalency limitation, but the institutions of higher education may charge students up to 10 percent of tuition and fees. The institution of higher education must provide fee waivers for low-income students, including those who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. Districts must provide general information about RS to all students in grades 10–12 and to the parents or guardians of those students. In the 2013-14 school year, more than 20,000 students participated in RS.

Academic Acceleration Incentive Program (AAIP). The AAIP was created in 2013 to provide funds that may be used to support teacher training, curriculum, technology, exam fees, and other costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students. Subject to funds appropriated, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) distributes AAIP awards to high schools based on the number of students at the school that earned dual credit in the previous year."

**Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments):** CHS. CHS is defined in part as a dual-credit program located on a high school campus or in a high school environment and CHS may include both academic and career and technical education. College credit earned through CHS must be applied toward general education or degree requirements, rather than major requirements.

Beginning in the 2015-16 school year, districts must be allocated an amount per college credit for students enrolled in CHS courses as specified in appropriations and adjusted for inflation. The minimum allocation is set at \$65 per quarter credit and must be reviewed every four years by OSPI, the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC), the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC), and the public baccalaureate institutions beginning in 2017.

Institutions of higher education may no longer charge tuition and fees to CHS students. Instead, districts must transmit to the institution an amount per credit for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student. OSPI must consult with SBCTC and participating institutions of higher education on the calculation and distribution of the funds.

OSPI must adopt rules for the administration of CHS. The rules must be jointly developed by OSPI, SBCTC, WSAC, and the public baccalaureate institutions, and the Association of Washington School Principals must be consulted. The rules must outline quality and eligibility standards that are informed by nationally recognized standards or models, must encourage the maximum use of the program, and may not narrow or limit enrollment options.

RS. Schools may use AAIP funds to support textbook fees and transportation to and from the institution of higher education for RS students.

Course sections and programs offered as RS courses must be open for registration to matriculated students at the participating institution of higher education. Courses consisting solely of high school students offered at a high school campus do not meet the definition of RS unless the offering high school is 30 or more driving miles from the nearest eligible institution of higher education as measured by the most direct route. Students participating in RS courses offered on a high school campus and consisting solely of high school students may be funded at no more than a combined 1.0 FTE including school district and institution of higher education enrollment.

Dual-Credit Reports. By September 15, 2016, WSAC must collaborate with the SBCTC, OSPI, and the public baccalaureate institutions to make recommendations to the Legislature on ways to streamline and improve dual credit programs. The recommendations must pay particular attention to increasing the participation of low-income and underrepresented students in the RS, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International programs.

Lapsed language regarding a RS report due in 2010 is removed from statute.

**EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments):** The amendment strikes all the provisions of the original bill. Please see the Summary for the provisions in the amendment.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on March 20, 2015.

**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 Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill:** PRO: RS is a great dual-credit program where students can take college courses on college campuses and typically do not have to pay tuition. CHS is also a great program where students can stay in the high school and receive instruction from a teacher certified by a college or university, but students typically have to pay fees for the program. Some institutions have tried to serve students by offering a program called Running Start in the High School in which the student stays in the high school but the institution charges OSPI at the RS rate. These programs, which are run by Central Washington University (CWU) and Eastern Washington University (EWU), are essentially CHS programs billed as RS. Other institutions run similar programs under CHS and are forced to charge their students. We need to fix this problem and stop the inequity in dual-credit programs based on how schools form partnerships. Currently there are multiple inconsistent frameworks across the state and we need consistency and a clear distinction between RS and CHS.

This bill will remove the Running Start in the High School programs and add subsidies for certain students to access CHS. This will make access to CHS more even across the state and is a win for low-income students who are not able to afford the dual-credit opportunities available to them. Equitable funding will increase access to dual credit programs overall. Funding for CHS is important because not all students have transportation or the ability to attend RS on college campuses. RS should not be the only free option and funding CHS can open pathways for students to a variety of higher education options. This bill will also increase access and improve dual-credit options by expanding CHS to students in tenth grade and ensuring that credits earned in CHS will apply to degree requirements.

CON: There are several good provisions in this bill including expanding CHS access to students in tenth grade and the expanded dual-credit notification provisions, but there may be unintended consequences from other provisions in the bill. Rural districts are concerned that this bill would eliminate the courses offered as Running Start in the High School through CWU and EWU. Some students live a substantial distance from the nearest college and cannot easily access RS programs. Running Start in the High School programs are essential in order to maintain dual-credit access for these rural schools and this bill could reduce opportunities for over 1000 students in more than 150 schools across the state. Running Start in the High School helps keep costs down for students and the overall system. There is inequity in the CHS program due to the ability of some students to pay for courses and earn credit while other students cannot.

Dual-credit programs are some of the most important programs some rural schools offer, have a large positive impact on students, and can change a school's culture. Students participating in dual-credit programs can earn a substantial amount of college credits and students with credits have more success and higher rates of graduation in higher education. These programs have helped train teachers, increase rigor, and encouraged seniors to take dual-credit classes instead of taking it easy during their final year. It is important to allow student leaders to take dual-credit courses while also remaining on campus and participating in activities. If schools could not offer these options to all students, rather than just low-income students, it would have a negative effect on students and families. Current law requires that the rules for RS should encourage maximum use of the program and may not narrow or limit enrollment options, but this bill would do just that.

OTHER: Dual-credit programs are an important and valuable component in the education system. They help students in high school see new opportunities in higher education and obtaining dual credit cuts students' time to a degree and increases the likelihood of completion. There are several good aspects of this bill including expanding grade level access, providing low-income students with funding, limits on the fees that institutions may charge, allowing Guaranteed Education Tuition credits to be used for dual-credit programs, and expanded notification provisions. There are recommendations from WSAC that have support and should be included in the bill and there is ongoing work to ensure the bill addresses the needs of students in rural schools. Adding independent colleges could increase access to the CHS program.

Running Start in the High School is both a recent and costly development. CHS courses offered through the University of Washington (UW) cost about \$350 per course, but similar courses offered through Running Start in the High School cost the state about three to four

times as much simply because they have a different name. Institutions should not receive RS money for providing what are essentially CHS courses. There is a need to ensure that both RS and CHS thrive as partners with one another. This bill provides clarity instead of the current patchwork of programs that creates haves and have-nots. The bill should be very clear that RS must happen on college campuses and RS and CHS should be returned to their original intent. The null and void clause should be eliminated and the delineation between RS and CHS should not be tied to funding for CHS subsidies. One of the key access barriers in CHS is the ability of students and families to pay for the courses and students should not be limited in their dual-credit options due to cost or to location, so funding for CHS subsidies is an important piece. Schools in urban areas also use Running Start in the High School and there should be equity in access for students in urban areas.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Reykdal, prime sponsor; Jene Jones, League of Education Voters; Paula Moore, Office of Financial Management.

CON: Jim Kowalkowski, Davenport School District, Rural Education Center; Doug Curtis, LaCrosse Schools; Jim Huckabay, Faculty Legislative Representative, CWU; Antonio Sanchez, CWU; David Buri, EWU.

OTHER: Genesee Adkins, UW; Tim Stetter, Director, UW in the High School; Marty Brown, SBCTC; Tom Fitzsimmons, Independent Colleges of WA; Maddy Thompson, WSAC; Charlie Brown, Tacoma School District.

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