

SENATE BILL REPORT

E2SHB 1546

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, March 24, 2015
Ways & Means, April 7, 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].

Ways & Means: 4/06/15, 4/07/15 [DPA, DNP, 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; 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)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hill, Chair; Braun, Vice Chair; Dammeier, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Ranking Member; Bailey, Becker, Brown, Fraser, Hewitt, Kohl-Welles, O'Ban, Padden, Rolfes and Schoesler.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

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.

Signed by Senators Honeyford, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Hatfield, Parlette and Warnick.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senators Keiser, Assistant Ranking Member on the Capital Budget; Ranker, Ranking Minority Member, Operating; Billig, Conway and Hasegawa.

Staff: Lorrell Noahr (786-7708)

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 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.

Guaranteed Education Tuition (GET) Program. Washington's prepaid college tuition program, known as the GET program, is established to help make higher education affordable and accessible to all citizens of the state. Parents or other individuals may purchase tuition units, and 100 units represent the cost of one year of resident undergraduate tuition at the highest-priced public university in the state. The state guarantees that the value of the account will keep pace with the cost of resident undergraduate tuition and state-mandated fees. Units may be redeemed for tuition, room and board, books, and other qualified

expenses at most institutions of higher education. Over 157,000 GET accounts have been opened and more than 38,000 students have used the accounts to attend institutions of higher education.

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 and within appropriated funds, school districts may 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.

Funding must be prioritized in the following manner:

1. for the 2015-16 school year only, students enrolled in an RS in the high school program for the 2014-15 school year;
2. students in a rural high school which is defined as more than 20 driving miles from an institution of higher education offering an RS program;
3. high schools receiving small schools funding enhancement in the omnibus appropriations act; and
4. low-income students in schools with limited dual-credit opportunities.

Students meeting the definition of items one through three above may receive up to ten CHS credits funded by the state. Students meeting the definition of item four may receive up to five CHS credits. If more districts apply for the subsidies for low-income students than funds are available for, then OSPI must prioritize school district applications.

Districts must remit allocations or subsidies to the institution an amount per credit for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student. If allocations for subsidies are provided, school districts cannot charge more than the specified amount per credit.

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.

Dual-Credit Reports. By September 15, 2016, WSAC must collaborate with 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 an RS report due in 2010 is removed from statute.

GET. Students may use GET units to pay for CHS and RS fees.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): CHS subsidy for all eligible students is eliminated. Instead, funding within available resources is prioritized to four different groups of students. The allowance for the 1.0 FTE for RS in the high school programs more than 30 miles from an institution of higher education offering an RS program is eliminated. Students may use GET credits to pay for CHS and RS fees. School districts receiving the subsidy may not charge tuition more than the subsidy rate provided in the omnibus appropriations act.

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 on Bill as Amended by Early Learning & K-12 Education.

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 (Early Learning & K-12 Education): 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 RS 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 RS 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 RS in the High School through CWU and EWU. Some students live a substantial distance from the nearest college and cannot easily access RS programs. RS 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. RS 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.

RS 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 RS 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 RS in the High School and there should be equity in access for students in urban areas.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): 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.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Bill as Amended by Early Learning & K-12 Education (Ways & Means): PRO: There is support for dual-credit programs, which are key to higher education access, and for the small school provisions. However, there are some concerns surrounding the definition of a rural school, specifically the 30-mile provision. Dual-credit courses should only offer courses for general education requirements. There is a need to fix the dual-credit definitions. If RS in the high school cannot be fully funded as RS is funded, we encourage using state resources for low-income students statewide. There should be a consideration to include students in the tenth grade for the CHS program. There is a concern that under current law the state is paying for RS students twice. Last year, the Legislature increased high school instructional time to 1080 hours. The current RS funding should be reevaluated, especially in light of how the Legislature will be dealing with *McCleary*. This bill creates a needed framework that provides an RS program at a college campus and a CHS program at the high schools. These programs should be expanded to reach more low-income students across the state, as recommended by the dual-credit workgroup.

CON: Thirty miles is too far to expect a high school student to drive. There is concern that some RS in the high school programs currently receiving funding will no longer receive funding under this bill. On the other hand, there are some CHS students who were not receiving funds that will now be funded by the state. This bill would limit access for RS for schools that are less than 30 miles from an institution of higher education with an RS program. We encourage protecting funding for all schools currently in the program. This bill would eliminate Tacoma School District's relationship with CWU. The Legislature should explore a cost structure that could allow RS in the high school to continue.

OTHER: Expanding dual-credit options is a priority for the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC). Families, students, and the state will save money by participating in dual-credit programs in the long term. It is important that students are able to select the dual-credit option that best suits their needs. Where they live and costs should not be barriers to these students.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Marty Brown, SBCTC; Jene Jones, League of Education Voters; Paula Moore, Office of Financial Management; Genesee Atkins, UW.

CON: Steve DuPont, CWU; David Buri, EWU; Charlie Brown, Tacoma Public Schools.

OTHER: Maddy Thompson, WSAC.

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