

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## ESHB 1333

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As of March 17, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to a systemwide credit policy regarding AP exams.

**Brief Description:** Requiring establishment of a systemwide policy for granting credit for AP exams.

**Sponsors:** House Committee on Higher Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Stambaugh, Springer, Harris, Tarleton, Haler, Muri, Jinkins and Bergquist).

**Brief History:** Passed House: 3/07/17, 56-41.

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education: 3/14/17.

### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the institutions of higher education to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting undergraduate credit for Advanced Placement (AP) exams.
- Requires the policy to be posted on campus websites effective for the fall 2017 academic term.
- Requires the institutions of higher education to conduct biennial reviews of the policy and to report to the Legislature beginning November 1, 2019.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**Staff:** Clint McCarthy (786-7319)

**Background:** AP exams allow high school students to earn college credits and skip introductory college classes if the student achieves a minimum score required by an institution of higher learning. Students in grades nine, ten, eleven or twelve may enroll in high school courses taught by high school teachers, using college level curricula, which is approved by the College Board through a syllabi review process. Students pay a \$91 fee to take an optional, final, standardized exam. The fee may be higher if the high school adds administrative costs to the fee. Some districts absorb the cost of the exam fee. Fee waivers, subsidized through a combination of state and federal funds, have historically been available for low-income students—reduced rate is \$15; federal funds may no longer be available as a

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result of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the restructuring of federal grants. Once a student is enrolled, the AP course is indicated on the high school transcript. It does not appear on the college transcript until and unless the college awards credit, based on the exam score. In Washington, 346 schools in 186 districts are offering AP programs.

Each college and university makes its own decisions about awarding credit and placement. Most institutions have a written policy that informs prospective students of what the minimum score for which a credit is earned and how many credits are earned. To receive credit, a student must request that the College Board send an official AP score report to the college either at the time of testing or afterward through a score report request. At institutions of higher learning in the state of Washington, the minimum score needed to earn credit can vary by program within an institution. For instance, the minimum score required in Biology is a four in order to get ten credits at the University of Washington. However, the minimum score in Art History is four in order to get five credits at the same institution.

Currently, Washington's public four-year institutions recognize a score of three on AP exams. Each year the four-year institutions provide the Washington Student Achievement Council with updates of college credit equivalencies for AP exams to populate the dual credit look-up tool and post this information on institutional websites.

**Summary of Bill:** The institutions of higher education must establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting as many undergraduate college credits to students who earn minimum scores of three on AP exams as possible and appropriate. The credit policy for all AP exams must be posted on campus websites effective for the 2017 fall academic term. In addition, the institutions of higher education must conduct biennial reviews of their policy and report to the Legislature by November 1st each year, beginning November 1, 2019.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: The goal is to reward juniors and seniors by providing consistency in the amount of credit awarded for AP exams. The bill provides a great balance between what students need and what the institutions need. This will help low-income students obtain college credit while in high school.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Representative Melanie Stambaugh, Prime Sponsor; Sara Stewart, The College Board; Dave Arbaugh, TVW Capitol Classroom - Meridian High School; Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.