

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5917

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education & Workforce Development, January 30, 2018

Title: An act relating to a systemwide credit policy regarding international baccalaureate exams.

Brief Description: Requiring a systemwide credit policy regarding international baccalaureate exams.

Sponsors: Senators Mullet, Palumbo, Wilson, Frockt, Rolfes and Liias.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/25/18, 1/30/18 [DP, DNP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the establishment of a policy for granting International Baccalaureate (IB) exam credit at the institutions of higher education.
- Requires that IB policies be posted on public institution of higher education websites.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Ranker, Chair; Palumbo, Vice Chair; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Carlyle, Liias, Miloscia, Nelson and Short.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Ericksen.

Staff: Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

Background: There are several dual credit opportunities for students in high school to earn college credits. National examination based options include the Advanced Placement (AP) Program, IB, and the College Level Examination Program.

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.

The IB Diploma Program is a two-year university preparation program for students aged 16 to 19. However, not all students seek to earn an IB diploma. Many students take individual IB classes. Students must pass an examination at the end of each course. The scoring for these examinations is a range of one to seven points. The minimum passing score is a three. According to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, there are 23 high schools in Washington that offer the IB Diploma Program; and, in 2015-16 there were 8,223 students taking IB courses.

Each institution of higher education has its own policy for how to award credit for IB examinations. Some of the institutions only award college credit for higher level courses, and some provide more credits for students who earned the IB diploma.

During the 2017 legislative session, ESB 5234 was enacted requiring the institutions of higher education to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting undergraduate college credits to students who earn minimum scores of three on AP examinations. The institutions are required to post the policy on campus websites effective for the 2017 fall academic term, and conduct reviews of the policy and report noncompliance in annual reports to the Legislature beginning November 1, 2019.

Summary of Bill: The institutions of higher education must establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting credit to students with a passing grade on IB exams. The goal of the policy is to award course credit where appropriate and maximize the number of college students given credit for their IB exam score.

The credit policy for all IB exams must be posted on each institution of higher education's website effective for the 2018 fall academic term. The institutions of higher education must conduct biennial reviews of the IB policy and report noncompliance to the appropriate committees of the Legislature by November 1, beginning November 1, 2020.

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: Last year we had similar legislation for awarding college credit for AP exams. We owe it to these students to create an easy to navigate system where they can see whether they can get credit or not when they take a dual enrollment course. Much has been made about gaps in knowledge for students with a four but some institutions have already deemed it to be sufficient. The state of Washington treats all AP and IB students in high school equally and then they are awarded credit differently in colleges and universities.

CON: There are a number of unintended consequences including students entering into courses they aren't prepared to succeed in. The institutions of higher education have been working on a comprehensive policy for awarding credit for all dual credit courses. The

faculty at UW feel that it is necessary for students to have a score of five to be successful in entry level courses. This bill narrows institutions ability to be flexible in awarding credit. A score of four means a student is missing some significant competencies and institutions can't know which competencies those are.

OTHER: Each of our universities have different programs, different requirements, and different paths for success. Each students preparedness should be assessed individually. There needs to be flexibility across disciplines. Faculty content experts have a significantly role and responsibility for recommending credit for prior learning and should be included as part of the process outlined in the bill.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Mark Mullet, Prime Sponsor; David Quinn, Edmonds Woodway High School; Ken Joling, Capital High School.

CON: Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents; Arlen Harris, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Janice DeCosmo, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, University of Washington; Matthew Campbell, VP for Learning and Student Success, Pierce College; Keith Klauss, Senior Director Articulation and Transfer Policy, Eastern Washington University.

OTHER: Sam Ligon, Council of Faculty; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Marie Sullivan, Washington State PTA.