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## Education Committee

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### SSB 5593

**Brief Description:** Addressing equity in access to dual credit opportunities.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Liias, Wilson, C., Das, Kuderer, Nguyen and Saldaña).

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires school districts, by the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, to provide documentation of Running Start students' low-income status to higher education institutions in which the students are enrolled.
- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Washington Student Achievement Council, to develop a centralized process for school districts to meet this requirement, subject to state funding.

**Hearing Date:** 3/18/19

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

#### **Background:**

##### Running Start.

The Running Start program allows students in grades 11 and 12 to take courses at participating higher education institutions. Upon completion, Running Start students earn both high school and college credits.

Running Start students and their families do not pay tuition, but must pay certain fees, purchase textbooks and other materials, and provide their own transportation to and from the higher education institutions. The fees must be prorated based on each student's credit load, and may include technology fees, all other mandatory fees, and a fee of up to 10 percent of tuition, building and operating fees, and service and activities fees.

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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.*

The higher education institutions must make available fee waivers for low-income Running Start students and must provide assistance on how to apply. Every effort must be made to communicate to students and their families the benefits of the fee waivers.

Each higher education institution must establish a written policy for the determination of low-income Running Start students. A Running Start student must be considered low income and eligible for a fee waiver upon proof that the student is currently qualified to receive free or reduced-price lunch at the student's high school. Acceptable documentation of low-income status may also include documentation that a Running Start student has been deemed eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in the last five years, or other criteria established in the institution's policy. To qualify for free lunches, a high school student's family income must be at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. High school students whose families have an income between 130 percent and 185 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for reduced-price lunches.

Washington Student Achievement Council.

The Washington Student Achievement Council provides strategic planning, oversight, advocacy, and programs to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in Washington. The agency's responsibilities include administration of student financial assistance programs and student outreach.

**Summary of Bill:**

By the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, school districts, upon knowledge of a low-income student's enrollment in Running Start, must provide documentation of the student's low-income status directly to institutions of higher education.

Subject to state funding, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the Washington Student Achievement Council, must develop a centralized process for school districts to provide students' low-income status to institutions of higher education.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on March 13, 2019.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.