

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5719

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Early Learning & K-12 Education, January 21, 2022

Title: An act relating to dual credit costs.

Brief Description: Concerning dual credit costs.

Sponsors: Senators Mullet and Gildon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/17/22, 1/21/22 [DPS-WM].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to create and administer a grant program to cover the per credit tuition fee for College in the High School (CHS) program courses for low-income students.
- Requires institutions of higher education to waive all mandatory fees for Running Start students.
- Lowers the per credit tuition fee for CHS program courses from \$65 per credit to \$35 per credit.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5719 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair, K-12; Wilson, C., Vice Chair, Early Learning; Hawkins, Ranking Member; Dozier, Hunt, McCune, Mullet and Pedersen.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Background: Running Start. Running Start allows eleventh- and twelfth-grade high school students to take courses at community colleges, technical colleges, and various four-year institutions of higher education. Upon completion of a course, students earn both high school and college credit.

Running Start students and their families do not pay tuition, but students must pay for college fees, purchase textbooks and other materials, and provide their own transportation to and from the institution. Since 2011, higher education institutions that are not community or technical colleges may charge up to 10 percent of tuition costs to students.

Institutions are reimbursed by local schools districts for costs of Running Start students. Current law requires districts to reimburse the institutions at a per student rate allotted for basic education funding, with the districts retaining 7 percent of these funds. Vocational students are funded at an additional rate.

College in the High School. College in the High School (CHS) programs provide college level courses in high schools or high school environments to qualified students who are in or are eligible for enrollment in grades 9 through 12. Students who participate in a CHS program are able to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing postsecondary level courses with a passing grade. Programs are established in individual agreements between the schools and colleges or universities.

The maximum per college credit tuition fee for a program course is \$65 per college credit, adjusted for inflation. High schools that offer CHS programs must provide general information about the program to all students in grades 8 through 12 and their guardians, as well as provide certain program information in course catalogues.

State funding for CHS programs does not include funding for students who are in or eligible for enrollment in grades 9 or 10. For students in grades 11 or 12, funding is prioritized according to statute with a limit of ten credits, although a lower limit may be established in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Subsidies may also be provided for students who meet financial aid requirements. The maximum annual number of subsidized credits that a student may receive through these provisions is limited by statute to five, but the Omnibus Appropriations Act may establish a lower limit.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): College in the High School. The maximum per college credit tuition fee for a program course is changed from \$65 per credit to \$35 per credit. Institutions of higher education shall be reimbursed the costs associated with the changes in the fee as a result of the act.

Subject to appropriation, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must create and administer a grant program for providing funds to school districts, charter

schools, and state-tribal compact schools to cover the credit tuition fee for CHS program courses for low-income students.

For purposes of the grant program, low-income students are defined as students who are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

OSPI may adopt rules necessary for the grant program. Rules adopted for the grant program must be jointly developed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Student Achievement Council, and the public baccalaureate institutions.

Running Start Fees. Institutions of higher education must waive all mandatory fees established by each institution for all Running Start students. Language pertaining to Running Start Fees is removed.

Institutions of higher education shall be reimbursed the costs associated with waiving all mandatory fees for Running Start students. All referenced changes to Running Start fees are subject to appropriation in the Omnibus Appropriations Act by June 30, 2022.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Modifies the CHS grant program to cover the credit tuition fee for low-income students and to have rules developed jointly with higher education agencies.
- Clarifies that institutions of higher education must waive all mandatory fees for Running Start students and that the institutions of higher education will be reimbursed for associated costs.
- Lowers the maximum per college credit tuition fee for a CHS program course from \$65 to \$35 and specifies that institutions of higher education will be reimbursed for associated costs.
- Adds a null-and-void clause for the lowering of the maximum credit tuition fee for CHS program courses.

Appropriation: The bill contains a section or sections to limit implementation to the availability of amounts appropriated for that specific purpose.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2022. Includes a null and void clause.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: Washington State students should

not have to pay in order to take courses while in high school. Dual credits allow students to potentially save costs while attending an institution of higher education. More students should be able to access higher education courses. Reducing higher education costs will help students with lesser means achieve their academic goals. The majority of jobs in Washington State require some sort of postsecondary education; cost can be a barrier for many students to these opportunities.

OTHER: Community and technical colleges do provide financial aid to one-third of their students. There are some concerns on funding and if these changes would hurt institutions of higher education financially.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Mark Mullet, Prime Sponsor; Steve DuPont, Central Washington University; Charlie Brown, Tacoma School District; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State PTA; Kristin Murphy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

OTHER: Jamie Traugott, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Juliet Schindler, College Success Foundation.

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