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**SENATE BILL 5265**

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**State of Washington**

**67th Legislature**

**2021 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Hunt, Das, Nguyen, Wellman, and Wilson, C.

Read first time 01/18/21. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of a bridge year pilot program;  
2 amending RCW 28A.600.290 and 28A.600.330; reenacting and amending RCW  
3 28A.600.310; adding new sections to chapter 28A.630 RCW; providing an  
4 expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630  
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) The bridge year pilot program is established. The office of  
9 the superintendent of public instruction shall administer the program  
10 as described in this section. The purpose of the pilot program is to  
11 provide students in the graduating class of 2021 and 2022 an  
12 additional year to address the learning loss and missed opportunities  
13 in extracurricular activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

14 (2)(a) Each high school participating in the pilot program shall  
15 designate a school staff member as a bridge year liaison to serve as  
16 the school's central point of contact for students interested in  
17 pursuing a bridge year and for students participating in a bridge  
18 year. Nothing in this section requires a school district to hire an  
19 individual to serve as a bridge year liaison.

20 (b)(i) A bridge year liaison shall develop an individual learning  
21 plan for each student pursuing a bridge year, in consultation with

1 the student. The individual learning plan must define academic and  
2 cocurricular goals for the bridge year and detail activities and  
3 strategies for accomplishing those goals including, but not limited  
4 to, counseling, academic support, coursework, and cocurricular or  
5 athletic participation.

6 (ii) The credits taken by a student in this program must form a  
7 coordinated sequence of academic content that prepares the student  
8 for high-skilled, high-wage, or in-demand occupations.

9 (iii) At the conclusion of each term of the bridge year, the host  
10 high school shall update the student's high school transcript to  
11 reflect any high school credits earned during the bridge year.

12 (3)(a) A student who has met all applicable high school  
13 graduation requirements in the graduating class of 2021 or the  
14 graduating class of 2022 may defer graduation from high school to  
15 pursue a bridge year. A student who intends to pursue a bridge year  
16 shall notify the student's host high school's bridge year liaison no  
17 later than the first day of the second term of the student's senior  
18 year of high school.

19 (b)(i) Except as provided in (ii) of this subsection (b), to be  
20 eligible to participate in the bridge year pilot program a student  
21 must be 19 years of age or younger and must not turn 20 years of age  
22 at any time during the bridge year.

23 (ii) A student is eligible to participate in the bridge year  
24 pilot program if the student will turn 20 years of age during the  
25 bridge year due to services provided pursuant to the student's  
26 individualized education program plan.

27 (c)(i) During the first term of the student's bridge year, the  
28 student must take between nine and 12 quarter credits, or the  
29 equivalent, at the student's host high school, an institution of  
30 higher education, or a combination thereof.

31 (ii) During the second term of the student's bridge year, the  
32 student must take between nine and 12 quarter credits, or the  
33 equivalent, at an institution of higher education.

34 (d) A student participating in this program must maintain a grade  
35 point average of at least 2.0 in order to remain in the bridge year  
36 pilot program.

37 (4) The host high school shall permit students participating in  
38 the bridge year pilot program to participate in graduation ceremonies  
39 with the graduating class of 2021 or class of 2022, as applicable,

1 but may not issue diplomas to those students until the conclusion of  
2 the bridge year.

3 (5) School districts participating in the bridge year pilot  
4 program shall expunge from a student's transcript any "D" or "F"  
5 grade, or its equivalent, for a course if the student takes the same  
6 course during the student's bridge year and completes the course with  
7 a higher grade than the grade in the student's transcript.

8 (6) The institution of higher education at which a student  
9 attends under this program shall report at least quarterly to the  
10 bridge year liaison at the student's host high school concerning the  
11 student's academic progress and performance, in a manner specified by  
12 the student's individual learning plan developed under subsection (2)  
13 of this section.

14 (7) (a) In the event that a student initially decides to pursue a  
15 bridge year in the fall term but does not continue in the following  
16 term, the student's host high school shall release all final  
17 transcripts and other records as necessary and as may be requested.

18 (b) A student who decides not to continue the bridge year is not  
19 eligible to participate in a sports program or other extracurricular  
20 activities under this section or section 2 of this act.

21 (8) For the purposes of this section:

22 (a) "Host high school" means the high school that a student  
23 pursuing a bridge year attended at the beginning of the student's  
24 senior year.

25 (b) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as in  
26 RCW 28B.10.016.

27 (9) Nothing in this section requires a student to pursue a bridge  
28 year.

29 (10) A private school may elect to participate in the bridge year  
30 pilot program created under this section.

31 (11) For purposes of funding allocations and student enrollment,  
32 students participating in the bridge year pilot program are running  
33 start students participating in the running start program under RCW  
34 28A.600.300.

35 (12) Students participating in the bridge year pilot program are  
36 eligible for college in the high school courses under RCW  
37 28A.600.290.

38 (13) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may  
39 adopt rules necessary for the effective and efficient implementation  
40 of this act.

1        NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 2.**    A new section is added to chapter 28A.630  
2    RCW to read as follows:

3        (1) A student who pursues a bridge year pursuant to this act may  
4    participate in activities sanctioned by the Washington  
5    interscholastic activities association and extracurricular activities  
6    at the student's host high school.

7        (2) A student participating in a sport or extracurricular  
8    activity during the student's bridge year shall pay applicable  
9    student athletic and activities fees and be subject to the host high  
10   school's student code of conduct, athletic code of conduct, and any  
11   other applicable codes, rules, or policies required for student  
12   participation in these activities.

13       (3) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, nothing  
14   in this act supersedes the governance or eligibility rules  
15   established by a local, state, or national organization with bona  
16   fide authority over a particular extracurricular activity.

17       (4) For students participating in an interscholastic activity  
18   under this section, the Washington interscholastic athletic  
19   association shall be requested to waive the applicable consecutive  
20   year eligibility rule.

21       (5) The Washington interscholastic activities association shall  
22   confer with the national collegiate athletic association or any other  
23   athletic association, conference, or group or organization with  
24   authority over intercollegiate athletics to permit that any student  
25   participating in a sport during a bridge year be eligible to declare  
26   as a college recruit during the bridge year and participate in  
27   intercollegiate athletics.

28       (6) Notwithstanding the provisions of any law, rule, or  
29   regulation to the contrary, an insurer doing business in the state  
30   and issuing liability insurance policies to school districts must  
31   provide coverage for students participating in a sport or  
32   extracurricular activity under this section as part of a school or  
33   school district's liability insurance policy.

34       (7) For purposes of this section, "host high school" has the same  
35   meaning as in section 1 of this act.

36       **Sec. 3.**    RCW 28A.600.290 and 2015 c 202 s 3 are each amended to  
37   read as follows:

38       (1)(a) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for  
39   this specific purpose and commencing with the 2015-16 school year,

1 funding may be allocated at an amount per college credit for eleventh  
2 and twelfth grade students ((~~or~~)), students who have not yet received  
3 a high school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in the  
4 eleventh or twelfth grade, and students participating in a bridge  
5 year under section 1 of this act, who are enrolled in college in the  
6 high school courses under this section as specified in the omnibus  
7 appropriations act and adjusted for inflation from the 2015-16 school  
8 year. The maximum annual number of allocated credits per  
9 participating student shall be specified in the omnibus  
10 appropriations act, which must not exceed ten credits. Funding shall  
11 be prioritized in the following order:

12 (i) High schools offering a running start in the high school  
13 program in school year 2014-15. These schools shall only receive  
14 prioritized funding in school year 2015-16;

15 (ii) Students whose residence or the high school in which they  
16 are enrolled is located twenty driving miles or more as measured by  
17 the most direct route from the nearest eligible institution of higher  
18 education offering a running start program, whichever is greater; and

19 (iii) High schools eligible for the small school funding  
20 enhancement in the omnibus appropriations act.

21 (b)(i) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for  
22 this specific purpose and commencing with the 2015-16 school year,  
23 and only after the programs in (a) of this subsection are funded, a  
24 subsidy may be provided per college credit for eleventh and twelfth  
25 grade students ((~~or~~)), students who have not yet received a high  
26 school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in the  
27 eleventh or twelfth grade, and students participating in a bridge  
28 year under section 1 of this act, who have been deemed eligible for  
29 free or reduced-price lunch and are enrolled in college in the high  
30 school courses under this section as specified in the omnibus  
31 appropriations act and adjusted for inflation from the 2015-16 school  
32 year. The maximum annual number of subsidized credits per  
33 participating student shall be specified in the omnibus  
34 appropriations act, which must not exceed five credits.

35 (ii) Districts wishing to participate in the subsidy program must  
36 apply to the office of the superintendent of public instruction by  
37 July 1st of each year and report the preliminary estimate of eligible  
38 students to receive the subsidy and the total number of projected  
39 credit hours.

1 (iii) The office of the superintendent of public instruction  
2 shall notify districts by September 1st of each school year if the  
3 district's students will receive the subsidy. If more districts apply  
4 than funding is available, the office of the superintendent of public  
5 instruction shall prioritize the district applications. The  
6 superintendent shall develop factors to determine priority including,  
7 but not limited to, the number of dual credit opportunities available  
8 for low-income students in the districts.

9 (c) Districts shall remit any allocations or subsidies on behalf  
10 of participating students under (a) and (b) of this subsection to the  
11 participating institution of higher education and those students  
12 shall not be required to pay for the credits.

13 (d) The minimum allocation and subsidy under this section is  
14 sixty-five dollars per quarter credit for credit-bearing  
15 postsecondary coursework. The office of the superintendent of public  
16 instruction, the student achievement council, the state board for  
17 community and technical colleges, and the public baccalaureate  
18 institutions shall review funding levels for the program every four  
19 years beginning in 2017 and recommend changes.

20 (e) Students may pay college in the high school fees with  
21 advanced college tuition payment program tuition units at a rate set  
22 by the advanced college tuition payment program governing body under  
23 chapter 28B.95 RCW.

24 (2) For the purposes of funding students enrolled in the college  
25 in the high school program in accordance with subsection (1) of this  
26 section, college in the high school is defined as a dual credit  
27 program located on a high school campus or in a high school  
28 environment in which a high school student, or a student  
29 participating in a bridge year under section 1 of this act, is able  
30 to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing  
31 postsecondary level courses with a passing grade.

32 (3) College in the high school programs may include both academic  
33 and career and technical education.

34 (4) College in the high school programs shall each be governed by  
35 a local contract between the district and the participating  
36 institution of higher education, in compliance with the rules adopted  
37 by the superintendent of public instruction under this section.

38 (5) The college in the high school program must include the  
39 provisions in this subsection.

1 (a) The high school and participating institution of higher  
2 education together shall define the criteria for student eligibility.  
3 The institution of higher education may charge tuition fees to  
4 participating students. If specific funding is provided in the  
5 omnibus appropriations act for the per credit allocations and per  
6 credit subsidies under subsection (1) of this section, the maximum  
7 per credit fee charged to any enrolled student may not exceed the  
8 amount of the per credit allocation or subsidy.

9 (b) The funds received by the participating institution of higher  
10 education may not be deemed tuition or operating fees and may be  
11 retained by the institution of higher education.

12 (c) Enrollment information on persons registered under this  
13 section must be maintained by the institution of higher education  
14 separately from other enrollment information and may not be included  
15 in official enrollment reports, nor may such persons be considered in  
16 any enrollment statistics that would affect higher education  
17 budgetary determinations.

18 (d) A school district must grant high school credit to a student  
19 enrolled in a program course if the student successfully completes  
20 the course. If no comparable course is offered by the school  
21 district, the school district superintendent shall determine how many  
22 credits to award for the course. The determination shall be made in  
23 writing before the student enrolls in the course. The credits shall  
24 be applied toward graduation requirements and subject area  
25 requirements. Evidence of successful completion of each program  
26 course shall be included in the student's secondary school records  
27 and transcript.

28 (e) A participating institution of higher education must grant  
29 college credit to a student enrolled in a program course if the  
30 student successfully completes the course. The college credit shall  
31 be applied toward general education requirements or degree  
32 requirements at institutions of higher education. Evidence of  
33 successful completion of each program course must be included in the  
34 student's college transcript.

35 (f) Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students or students who  
36 have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent and are  
37 eligible to be in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades, and  
38 students participating in a bridge year under section 1 of this act,  
39 may participate in the college in the high school program.

1 (g) Participating school districts must provide general  
2 information about the college in the high school program to all  
3 students in grades nine through twelve and to the parents and  
4 guardians of those students.

5 (h) Full-time and part-time faculty at institutions of higher  
6 education, including adjunct faculty, are eligible to teach program  
7 courses.

8 (6) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules  
9 for the administration of this section. The rules shall be jointly  
10 developed by the superintendent of public instruction, the state  
11 board for community and technical colleges, the student achievement  
12 council, and the public baccalaureate institutions. The association  
13 of Washington school principals must be consulted during the rules  
14 development. The rules must outline quality and eligibility standards  
15 that are informed by nationally recognized standards or models. In  
16 addition, the rules must encourage the maximum use of the program and  
17 may not narrow or limit the enrollment options.

18 (7) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this  
19 section.

20 (a) "Institution of higher education" has the definition in RCW  
21 28B.10.016, and also includes a public tribal college located in  
22 Washington and accredited by the Northwest commission on colleges and  
23 universities or another accrediting association recognized by the  
24 United States department of education.

25 (b) "Program course" means a college course offered in a high  
26 school under the college in the high school program.

27 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.600.310 and 2019 c 252 s 115 and 2019 c 176 s 2  
28 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

29 (1)(a) Eleventh and twelfth grade students (~~( $\oplus$ )~~), students who  
30 have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high  
31 school diploma and are eligible to be in the eleventh or twelfth  
32 grades, and students participating in a bridge year under section 1  
33 of this act, may apply to a participating institution of higher  
34 education to enroll in courses or programs offered by the institution  
35 of higher education.

36 (b) The course sections and programs offered as running start  
37 courses must also be open for registration to matriculated students  
38 at the participating institution of higher education and may not be a



1 course consisting solely of high school students offered at a high  
2 school campus.

3 (c) A student receiving home-based instruction enrolling in a  
4 public high school for the sole purpose of participating in courses  
5 or programs offered by institutions of higher education shall not be  
6 counted by the school district in any required state or federal  
7 accountability reporting if the student's parents or guardians filed  
8 a declaration of intent to provide home-based instruction and the  
9 student received home-based instruction during the school year before  
10 the school year in which the student intends to participate in  
11 courses or programs offered by the institution of higher education.  
12 Students receiving home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW  
13 and students attending private schools approved under chapter 28A.195  
14 RCW shall not be required to meet the student learning goals or to  
15 learn the state learning standards. However, students are eligible to  
16 enroll in courses or programs in participating universities only if  
17 the board of directors of the student's school district has decided  
18 to participate in the program. Participating institutions of higher  
19 education, in consultation with school districts, may establish  
20 admission standards for these students. If the institution of higher  
21 education accepts a secondary school pupil for enrollment under this  
22 section, the institution of higher education shall send written  
23 notice to the pupil and the pupil's school district within ten days  
24 of acceptance. The notice shall indicate the course and hours of  
25 enrollment for that pupil.

26 (2) (a) In lieu of tuition and fees, as defined in RCW 28B.15.020  
27 and 28B.15.041:

28 (i) Running start students shall pay to the community or  
29 technical college all other mandatory fees as established by each  
30 community or technical college and, in addition, the state board for  
31 community and technical colleges may authorize a fee of up to ten  
32 percent of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and  
33 28B.15.041; and

34 (ii) All other institutions of higher education operating a  
35 running start program may charge running start students a fee of up  
36 to ten percent of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and  
37 28B.15.041 in addition to technology fees.

38 (b) The fees charged under this subsection (2) shall be prorated  
39 based on credit load.

1 (c) Students may pay fees under this subsection with advanced  
2 college tuition payment program tuition units at a rate set by the  
3 advanced college tuition payment program governing body under chapter  
4 28B.95 RCW.

5 (3)(a) The institutions of higher education must make available  
6 fee waivers for low-income running start students. A student shall be  
7 considered low income and eligible for a fee waiver upon proof that  
8 the student is currently qualified to receive free or reduced-price  
9 lunch. Acceptable documentation of low-income status may also  
10 include, but is not limited to, documentation that a student has been  
11 deemed eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in the last five  
12 years, or other criteria established in the institution's policy.

13 (b)(i) By the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, school  
14 districts, upon knowledge of a low-income student's enrollment in  
15 running start, must provide documentation of the student's low-income  
16 status, under (a) of this subsection, directly to institutions of  
17 higher education.

18 (ii) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this  
19 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public  
20 instruction, in consultation with the Washington student achievement  
21 council, shall develop a centralized process for school districts to  
22 provide students' low-income status to institutions of higher  
23 education to meet the requirements of (b)(i) of this subsection.

24 (c) Institutions of higher education, in collaboration with  
25 relevant student associations, shall aim to have students who can  
26 benefit from fee waivers take advantage of these waivers.  
27 Institutions shall make every effort to communicate to students and  
28 their families the benefits of the waivers and provide assistance to  
29 students and their families on how to apply. Information about  
30 waivers shall, to the greatest extent possible, be incorporated into  
31 financial aid counseling, admission information, and individual  
32 billing statements. Institutions also shall, to the greatest extent  
33 possible, use all means of communication, including but not limited  
34 to web sites, online catalogues, admission and registration forms,  
35 mass email messaging, social media, and outside marketing to ensure  
36 that information about waivers is visible, compelling, and reaches  
37 the maximum number of students and families that can benefit.

38 (4) The pupil's school district shall transmit to the institution  
39 of higher education an amount per each full-time equivalent college  
40 student at statewide uniform rates for vocational and nonvocational

1 students. The superintendent of public instruction shall separately  
2 calculate and allocate moneys appropriated for basic education under  
3 RCW 28A.150.260 to school districts for purposes of making such  
4 payments and for granting school districts seven percent thereof to  
5 offset program related costs. The calculations and allocations shall  
6 be based upon the estimated statewide annual average per full-time  
7 equivalent high school student allocations under RCW 28A.150.260,  
8 excluding small high school enhancements, and applicable rules  
9 adopted under chapter 34.05 RCW. The superintendent of public  
10 instruction, participating institutions of higher education, and the  
11 state board for community and technical colleges shall consult on the  
12 calculation and distribution of the funds. The funds received by the  
13 institution of higher education from the school district shall not be  
14 deemed tuition or operating fees and may be retained by the  
15 institution of higher education. A student enrolled under this  
16 subsection shall be counted for the purpose of meeting enrollment  
17 targets in accordance with terms and conditions specified in the  
18 omnibus appropriations act.

19 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.600.330 and 1994 c 205 s 4 are each amended to  
20 read as follows:

21 (1) A pupil who enrolls in an institution of higher education in  
22 grade eleven may not enroll in postsecondary courses under RCW  
23 28A.600.300 through 28A.600.390 for high school credit and  
24 postsecondary credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework  
25 for two academic years. A pupil who first enrolls in an institution  
26 of higher education in grade twelve may not enroll in postsecondary  
27 courses under this section for high school credit and postsecondary  
28 credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework for one  
29 academic year.

30 (2) The credit limitations in this section do not apply to  
31 students participating in the bridge year pilot program created in  
32 section 1 of this act.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act expires July 31, 2023.

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act is necessary for the immediate  
35 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of

1 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes  
2 effect immediately.

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