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## Postsecondary Education & Workforce Committee

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### 2SSB 5048

**Brief Description:** Eliminating college in the high school fees.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Mullet, Rolfes, Billig, Hasegawa, Hawkins, Holy, Lias, Nguyen, Pedersen, Valdez, Wagoner, Warnick, Wellman and Wilson, C.).

#### Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Requires institutions of higher education to provide enrollment and registration in College in the High School (CHS) courses at no cost to students in grades 9 through 12 at public high schools.
- Requires the Legislature to appropriate funds to fund CHS courses, at inflation-adjusted rates.
- Directs high schools that provide a CHS course to include information in the course catalog that there is no fee for students to enroll in a CHS course.

**Hearing Date:** 3/21/23

**Staff:** Saranda Ross (786-7068)

#### Background:

College in the High School (CHS) is a dual credit program that provides 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. Courses are taught at the high school by high school teachers or faculty from institutions of higher education with college curriculum and college textbooks,

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and with oversight by faculty and staff from institutions of higher education. Students can 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 institutions of higher education.

An institution of higher education may charge tuition fees per credit to each student enrolled. The maximum per college credit tuition fee is \$65 per college credit, adjusted for inflation. These fees are not tuition or operating fees and may be retained by the institution of higher education.

A school district, charter school, or state-tribal compact school must award high school credit to students who successfully complete a CHS course. If no comparable course exists, the chief administrator determines how many credits to award before students enroll in the course. The awarded credit must be applied toward graduation requirements and subject area requirements, and must be included in the student's high school records and transcript. Similarly, institutions of higher education must award college credit to students who successfully complete a CHS course, must apply the credit toward general education requirements or degree requirements, and must include the credit in the student's college transcript.

High schools that offer CHS programs must provide general information about program fees to all students in grades 8 through 12 and their guardians, as well as provide certain program information in course catalogs. Included in that information is a notification that paying for college credit starts an official college transcript with the institution of higher education offering the CHS course, regardless of performance in the course, and that college credit earned upon successful completion of a CHS course may count only as elective credit if transferred to another institution of higher education.

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 to five, but the omnibus appropriations act may establish a lower limit.

Institutions of higher education are the state universities, the regional universities, The Evergreen State College, the community and technical colleges, and a public tribal college in Washington.

### **Summary of Bill:**

Beginning September 1, 2023, institutions of higher education must provide enrollment and registration in CHS courses at no cost for eligible students in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades at public high schools. Course administration data must be submitted annually by October 15 to the Office of Financial Management and legislative fiscal staff.

Beginning with the 2023-2025 Omnibus Operating Appropriation Act (operating budget), the Legislature must pass an operating budget that appropriates state funding for CHS courses administered at public secondary schools. State appropriation shall be calculated using the total CHS courses administered in the prior academic year, funded at a rate of:

- \$6,000 per CHS course administered by a state university;
- \$5,500 per CHS course administered by a regional university or the state college; or
- \$3,500 per CHS course administered by a community or technical college.

Beginning with the fiscal year 2025, the rate per CHS course must be adjusted annually for inflation as measured by the Consumer Price Index.

High schools that provide a CHS course must include information in the course catalog that there is no fee for students to enroll. Institutions of higher education offering CHS must:

- provide evidence of completion of each program course on the student's college transcripts;
- grant undergraduate college credit as appropriate and applicable to the student's degree requirements; and
- provide course equivalencies for CHS courses and policy for awarding credit on the institution's website.

The statute permitting institutions of higher education to charge students a per-credit tuition fee is repealed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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