

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5670

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Higher Education & Workforce Development, February 15, 2023

Title: An act relating to permitting 10th grade students to participate in running start in online settings.

Brief Description: Permitting 10th grade students to participate in running start in online settings.

Sponsors: Senators Hawkins, Randall, Holy, Kuderer, Nguyen, Nobles, Saldaña and Wilson, L..

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education & Workforce Development: 2/08/23, 2/15/23 [DPS-WM].

Brief Summary of First Substitute Bill

- Permits 10th grade students to participate in online-only Running Start courses.
- Requires that 10th grade Running Start students take no more than five quarter credits per term, or the semester equivalent.
- Defines online courses as those in which the entirety of the course time is spent in a virtual setting or not in person.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5670 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Randall, Chair; Nobles, Vice Chair; Holy, Ranking Member; Hawkins and Liias.

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.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: Running Start. Running Start allows 11th- and 12th-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 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.

A pupil who enrolls in Running Start courses in grade 11 may not enroll for high school credit and postsecondary credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework for two academic years. A pupil who enrolls in Running Start courses in grade 12 may not enroll for high school credit and postsecondary credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework for one academic year.

Summary of Bill (First Substitute): Tenth grade students may enroll in online Running Start courses, defined as courses in which an entirety of the course time is spent in a virtual setting or not in person. Tenth grade students enrolling in Running Start may enroll in no more than five quarter credits per term, or the semester equivalent

In providing information about course offerings, institutions of higher education must designate whether the course is eligible for 10th-grade Running Start students.

Calculations of total coursework amounts for the purpose of Running Start enrollment limits shall not include courses taken in grade 10.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (First Substitute):

- Specifies that 10th grade students may only enroll in Running Start classes in which the entirety of the course is online.
- Requires that 10th grade Running Start students take no more than five quarter credits per term, or the semester equivalent.
- Requires institutions of higher education to designate in their course offerings whether the course is eligible for Running Start and for which grades of Running Start students.

- Modifies the section prescribing 11th and 12th grade Running Start limits to exclude courses taken in 10th grade.
- Removes language relating to cooperative agreements with Community and Technical Colleges in Oregon and Idaho for 10th grade students.

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 on Original Bill: *The committee recommended a different version of the bill than what was heard.* PRO: This would be an excellent opportunity for 10th graders who want to be academically challenged, to participate in Running Start if the majority of the workload is online. Taking only online courses will alleviate some of the concerns around having 10th graders in a college environment, as well as transportation concerns.

CON: This bill may impact student development at a critical point in their education. Few students in this age bracket are successful with online courses. Pulling more students out of schools may limit their ability to run comprehensive programs. This would cut families and counselors out of the ability to provide support to 10th grade students.

OTHER: Dual credit programs can positively impact student success. Ensuring equitable access to dual credit programs is a priority; this bill may further add to existing equity issues as some students do not have access to Internet or computers. This will create challenges for master scheduling and budgeting for smaller school districts.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Brad Hawkins, Prime Sponsor.

CON: Roz Thompson, Association of Washington School Principals.

OTHER: Kristin Murphy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

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