

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5670

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As of February 8, 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.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Permits 10th grade students to participate in online Running Start courses.
- Defines online courses as those in which a majority of the course time is spent in a virtual setting or not in person.

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**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**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

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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.

**Summary of Bill:** Tenth grade students may enroll in online Running Start courses, defined as courses in which a majority of the course time is spent in a virtual setting or not in person.

**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:** 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.