
SENATE BILL 5617

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2023 Regular Session

By Senators Wellman, Nguyen, Hasegawa, Lias, Lovelett, Nobles, and C. Wilson

Read first time 01/30/23. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to facilitating course equivalency agreements
2 between skill centers and school districts; amending RCW 28A.230.097,
3 28A.300.236, and 28A.320.208; reenacting and amending RCW
4 28A.700.070; and adding a new section to chapter 28A.245 RCW.

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.245
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) An interdistrict cooperative agreement between a host
9 district and all participating school districts in a skill center
10 under RCW 28A.245.010 must stipulate that any course equivalencies
11 approved under RCW 28A.700.070 or adopted local course equivalencies
12 approved by the host district must be honored by other participating
13 school districts.

14 (2) The list of approved local and state equivalency courses must
15 be provided to participating districts on an annual basis by
16 September 1st.

17 (3) Students served at any core, branch, or satellite skill
18 center campus must have access to academic credit for any approved
19 local or state equivalency courses following transcription
20 requirements as outlined in RCW 28A.230.097.

1 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.097 and 2019 c 221 s 2 are each amended to
2 read as follows:

3 (1) Each high school or school district board of directors shall
4 adopt course equivalencies for career and technical high school
5 courses offered to students in high schools and skill centers. A
6 career and technical course equivalency may be for whole or partial
7 credit. Each school district board of directors shall develop a
8 course equivalency approval procedure. Boards of directors must
9 approve AP computer science courses as equivalent to high school
10 mathematics or science, and must denote on a student's transcript
11 that AP computer science qualifies as a math-based quantitative
12 course for students who take the course in their senior year.

13 (2) Until September 1, 2021, a school district board of directors
14 must, at a minimum, grant academic course equivalency for at least
15 one statewide equivalency high school career and technical course
16 from the list of courses approved by the superintendent of public
17 instruction under RCW 28A.700.070.

18 (3) (a) If the list of courses is revised after the 2015-16 school
19 year, the school district board of directors must grant academic
20 course equivalency based on the revised list beginning with the
21 school year immediately following the revision.

22 (b) Each high school or school district board of directors may
23 additionally adopt local course equivalencies for career and
24 technical education courses that are not on the list of courses
25 approved by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW
26 28A.700.070 as local equivalency courses in support of RCW
27 28A.700.070.

28 (c) Approved local or state equivalency courses at any core,
29 branch, or satellite skill center must be offered for academic credit
30 for all enrolled students from participating districts.

31 (4) On and after September 1, 2021, any statewide equivalency
32 course offered by a school district or accessed at a skill center
33 must be offered for academic credit.

34 (5) Career and technical courses determined to be equivalent to
35 academic core courses, in full or in part, by the high school or
36 school district shall be accepted as meeting core requirements,
37 including graduation requirements, if the courses are recorded on the
38 student's transcript using the equivalent academic high school
39 department designation and title. Full or partial credit shall be
40 recorded as appropriate. The high school or school district shall

1 also issue and keep record of course completion certificates that
2 demonstrate that the career and technical courses were successfully
3 completed as needed for industry certification, college credit, or
4 preapprenticeship, as applicable. The certificate shall be part of
5 the student's high school and beyond plan. The office of the
6 superintendent of public instruction shall develop and make available
7 electronic samples of certificates of course completion.

8 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.300.236 and 2018 c 177 s 303 are each amended to
9 read as follows:

10 (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
11 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
12 instruction must create methodologies for implementing equivalency
13 crediting on a broader scale across the state and facilitate its
14 implementation including, but not limited to, the following:

15 (a) Implementing statewide career and technical education course
16 equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 and
17 28A.230.097 for high schools and skill centers (~~(in science,~~
18 ~~technology, engineering, and mathematics)~~). This may include
19 development of additional equivalency course frameworks in core
20 subject areas, course performance assessments, and development and
21 delivery of professional development for districts and skill centers
22 implementing the career and technical education frameworks; ~~((and))~~

23 (b) Providing competitive grant funds to school districts to
24 increase the integration and rigor of academic instruction in career
25 and technical education equivalency courses. The grant funds must be
26 used to support teams of general education and career and technical
27 education teachers to convene and design course performance
28 assessments, deepen the understanding of integrating academic and
29 career and technical education in student instruction, and develop
30 professional learning modules for school districts to plan
31 implementation of equivalency crediting; and

32 (c) Conducting a review of implementation requirements of RCW
33 28A.230.097 and providing technical assistance to districts to ensure
34 state course equivalencies are being consistently offered for
35 academic credit for students at high schools and skill centers.

36 (2) Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, school districts shall
37 annually report to the office of the superintendent of public
38 instruction the following information:

1 (a) The annual number of students participating in state-approved
2 equivalency courses; and

3 (b) The annual number of state approved equivalency credit
4 courses offered in school districts and skill centers.

5 (3) Beginning December 1, 2018, and every December 1st
6 thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction
7 shall annually submit the following information to the office of the
8 governor, the state board of education, and the appropriate
9 committees of the legislature:

10 (a) The selected list of equivalent career and technical
11 education courses and their curriculum frameworks that the
12 superintendent of public instruction has approved under RCW
13 28A.700.070; (~~and~~)

14 (b) A summary of the school district information reported under
15 subsection (2) of this section; and

16 (c) A summary of implementation efforts and review findings
17 determined under subsection (1) of this section, including
18 recommendations for increasing access to equivalency coursework.

19 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.320.208 and 2019 c 252 s 114 are each amended to
20 read as follows:

21 (1) At the beginning of each school year, school districts must
22 notify parents and guardians of enrolled students from eighth through
23 twelfth grade about each student assessment required by the state,
24 the minimum state-level graduation requirements, and any additional
25 school district graduation requirements. The information may be
26 provided when the student is enrolled, contained in the student or
27 parent handbook, or posted on the school district's website. The
28 notification must include the following:

29 (a) When each assessment will be administered;

30 (b) Whether the results of the assessment will be used for
31 program placement or grade-level advancement;

32 (c) When the assessment results will be released to parents or
33 guardians and whether there will be an opportunity for parents and
34 teachers to discuss strategic adjustments; (~~and~~)

35 (d) Whether the assessment is required by the school district,
36 state, federal government, or more than one of these entities; and

37 (e) What opportunities exist at the school district for students
38 to meet credit-based graduation requirements through equivalency

1 courses including those under RCW 28A.230.097 and courses offered by
2 skill centers.

3 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
4 provide information to the school districts to enable the districts
5 to provide the information to the parents and guardians in accordance
6 with subsection (1) of this section.

7 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.700.070 and 2018 c 191 s 1 and 2018 c 177 s 304
8 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

9 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
10 support school district efforts under RCW 28A.230.097 to adopt course
11 equivalencies for career and technical courses by:

12 (a) Recommending career and technical curriculum suitable for
13 course equivalencies;

14 (b) Publicizing best practices for high schools and school
15 districts in developing and adopting course equivalencies; and

16 (c) In consultation with the Washington association for career
17 and technical education, providing professional development,
18 technical assistance, and guidance for school districts seeking to
19 expand their lists of equivalent courses.

20 (2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
21 provide professional development, technical assistance, and guidance
22 for school districts to develop career and technical course
23 equivalencies that also qualify as advanced placement courses.

24 (3) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation
25 with one or more technical working groups convened for this purpose,
26 shall develop and, after an opportunity for public comment, approve
27 curriculum frameworks for a selected list of career and technical
28 courses that may be offered by high schools or skill centers whose
29 academic standards content is considered equivalent in full or in
30 part to the academic courses that meet high school graduation
31 requirements. These courses may include equivalency to English
32 language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, world
33 languages, or health and physical education. The content of the
34 courses must be aligned with the most current Washington K-12
35 learning standards in English language arts, mathematics, science,
36 arts, world languages, health and physical education, social studies,
37 and required industry standards. The first list of courses under this
38 subsection must be developed and approved before the 2015-16 school
39 year. Thereafter, the superintendent of public instruction may

1 periodically update or revise the list of courses using the process
2 in this subsection.

3 (4) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the
4 superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grant funds to
5 school districts to increase the integration and rigor of academic
6 instruction in career and technical courses. Grant recipients are
7 encouraged to use grant funds to support teams of academic and
8 technical teachers. The superintendent of public instruction may
9 require that grant recipients provide matching resources using
10 federal Carl Perkins funds or other fund sources.

11 (5) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the
12 superintendent of public instruction shall convene a technical
13 working group to determine potential equivalency development of
14 coursework for technology-based competitive student activities in
15 alignment with the arts and other content areas as applicable. This
16 technical working group shall include educators from school districts
17 or educational service districts that have experience with
18 technology-based competitive student activities. The superintendent
19 of public instruction shall develop and approve course equivalencies
20 to include in the updated list established in subsection (3) of this
21 section based on the work of the technical working group.

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