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**HOUSE BILL 1273**

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**State of Washington 69th Legislature 2025 Regular Session**

**By** Representatives Paul, Eslick, Salahuddin, Bergquist, Reed, Nance, Timmons, Pollet, Fey, and Simmons

AN ACT Relating to improving student access to dual credit programs including career and technical education dual credit programs; amending RCW 28B.50.531; adding a new section to chapter 28A.310 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.150 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.245 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.300 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28B.10 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The legislature finds that students who participate in dual credit programs have higher rates of college enrollment, persistence, and completion. Dual credit programs are an important economic development for Washington because they equip students with the skills needed for high-skill, high-wage employment and continued education in high-demand sectors.

(2) Career and technical education (CTE) dual credit is the most commonly accessed form of dual credit in Washington and has significant potential to improve equitable access to postsecondary pathways for students from all backgrounds. However, it lags behind other course-based dual credit programs in ensuring that students receive a transcripted credit while in high school, and that the credit they earn will transfer to the postsecondary institution of their choice.

(3) Therefore, the legislature intends to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment by increasing the collaboration between state and local partners, study the feasibility of improving the state's dual credit administrative data management system, create and encourage the use of statewide articulation agreements for CTE dual credit courses, and receive recommendations on future amendments to state dual credit policies.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.310 RCW to read as follows:

(1) Each educational service district shall collaborate with the following entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment: The office of the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, regional participating institutions of higher education, regional skill centers established under chapter 28A.245 RCW, regional registered apprenticeship programs approved under chapter 49.04 RCW, local public high schools, and each school district operating within the educational service district.

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the regional efforts required by subsection (1) of this section must include the following activities:

(a) Developing, and updating annually, a comprehensive catalog of dual credit courses and programs offered to students enrolled in each local public high school;

(b) Aligning career and technical education dual credit programs available within the educational service district with regional postsecondary credential pathways and apprenticeships leading to in-demand career fields;

(c) Providing technical assistance to public high schools and institutions of higher education to improve the accuracy and speed of awarding and transcripting dual credits;

(d) Providing professional development for staff of the public high schools and the institutions of higher education to develop, align, and articulate dual credit courses; and

(e) Supporting public high school staff in the following activities:

(i) Outreach to prospective students and students who have completed career and technical education dual credit courses and are eligible for postsecondary credit about how to receive and where to apply the credit;

(ii) Providing technical assistance to public high school staff in course curriculum alignment for career and technical education dual credit courses;

(iii) Providing technical assistance to staff of the public high schools and the institutions of higher education in the development of articulation agreements for career and technical education dual credit courses; and

(iv) Awarding equipment and supplies grants for career and technical education dual credit courses that meet emerging needs in high-demand, high-paying industries.

(3) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Institution of higher education" has the same meaning as in RCW 28A.600.287.

(b) "Public high school" means a public school as defined in RCW 28A.150.010 with any of grades nine through 12.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) The state board for community and technical colleges shall develop a plan for improving or replacing its online, statewide enrollment and reporting system for career and technical education dual credit. The plan must include an estimated timeline and cost estimates, including the cost of technical assistance and training, technology updates, and ongoing maintenance requirements, that may be needed to, among other things:

(a) Improve cross-system compatibility with the community and technical college administrative system, as well as the comprehensive education data and research system of the office of the superintendent of public instruction;

(b) Create tracking of, and alerts for, articulation agreement updates;

(c) Create searchable fields for course titles;

(d) Improve student account verification; and

(e) Add data validation features.

(2) In developing the plan, the state board for community and technical colleges shall:

(a) Review its June 2022, Washington career and technical education dual credit final report, including the interim report and appendices;

(b) Conduct a cost-benefit analysis of moving to a single, statewide system for administering either all dual credit programs or only the career and technical education dual credit program; and

(c) Consult with other states that have adopted a single, statewide system for administering one or more dual credit programs.

(3) By October 1, 2026, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the state board for community and technical colleges must report to the appropriate committees of the legislature with the results of its study and its recommendations for improving dual credit administrative data management, with particular focus on the management of administrative data for career and technical education dual credit programs.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.50.531 and 2008 c 170 s 108 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) It is the legislature's intent to recognize and support the work of community and technical colleges, high schools, and skill centers in creating articulation and dual credit agreements for career and technical education students, in part by codifying current practice.

(2) Community and technical colleges shall create agreements with high schools and skill centers to offer dual high school and college credit for secondary career and technical courses. Agreements shall be subject to approval by the chief instructional officer of the college and the principal and the career and technical education director of the high school or the executive director of the skill center.

(3) Community and technical colleges may create dual credit agreements with high schools and skill centers that are located outside the college district boundary or service area.

(4) If a community or technical college has created an agreement with a high school or skill center to offer college credit for a secondary career and technical course, all community and technical colleges shall accept the course for an equal amount of college credit.

(5)(a)(i) The state board for community and technical colleges shall create, and publish on its website, statewide articulation agreements for career and technical education dual credit courses. A multiyear workplan must be published on its website and updated annually. These activities must be conducted in collaboration with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and other relevant stakeholders.

(ii) The statewide articulation agreements for the five most common career and technical education dual credit courses must be created and published by December 1, 2026.

(b) Community and technical colleges, high schools, and skill centers are strongly encouraged to use available statewide articulation agreements.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) In compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the association of educational service districts shall jointly report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the implementation of this act and with recommendations for additional improvements to state dual credit policies. The preliminary report is due by December 10, 2025, and the final report is due by December 10, 2026.

(2) One or both reports must include the following information:

(a) Findings regarding the initial streamlining of regional efforts to support dual credit access and attainment as required under section 2 of this act;

(b) Findings regarding the creation of statewide articulation agreements as required under RCW 28B.50.531; and

(c) Recommendations to the legislature and relevant state agencies for:

(i) Improving career and technical education course articulation and for the development of statewide articulation agreements;

(ii) Improving data collection and reporting methods;

(iii) Credit transcription and transfer processes;

(iv) Ensuring college and career counseling for high school students includes robust and accurate information about dual credit pathways, including career and technical education dual credit, and their alignment to postsecondary credential and apprenticeship opportunities;

(v) Further alignment of career and technical education dual credit with career-connected learning, apprenticeship, and credential pathways; and

(vi) Identification of additional priority career and technical education dual credit courses for statewide articulation, considering, but not limited to, the targeted industry sectors under RCW 43.330.090.

(3) The final report must provide recommendations for future amendments to state dual credit policies. These recommendations must include potential statutory changes, suggestions for administrative rule improvements, and approaches for supporting equitable student access to, and the effectiveness of, a variety of dual credit programs statewide.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.150 RCW to read as follows:

School districts and public high schools shall collaborate with the educational service districts and other specified entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment as required by section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.245 RCW to read as follows:

The skill centers shall collaborate with the educational service districts and other specified entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment as required by section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.300 RCW to read as follows:

The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall collaborate with the educational service districts and other specified entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment as required by section 2 of this act.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28B.10 RCW to read as follows:

The state board for community and technical colleges and institutions of higher education participating in dual credit programs shall collaborate with the educational service districts and other specified entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment as required by section 2 of this act.

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