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**SENATE BILL 5724**

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

**By** Senators Krishnadasan, Boehnke, and Cortes

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.600 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.320 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.245 RCW; adding a new section to chapter 28A.310 RCW; creating new sections; and providing expiration dates.

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 element of 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) Strengthening dual credit programs and transitions from secondary to postsecondary education requires a coordinated statewide approach. This effort requires collaboration and leadership from the state board for community and technical colleges and the office of the superintendent of public instruction to ensure students can engage in all forms of dual credit opportunities that align with their career and academic interests.

(3) Career and technical education 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 credit on their transcript while in high school, and that the credit they earn will transfer into the postsecondary institution of their choice.

(4) Therefore, the legislature intends to streamline statewide and regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment by increasing the collaboration between state and local partners, studying the feasibility of improving the state's dual credit administrative data management system, creating and encouraging the use of statewide articulation agreements for career and technical education dual credit courses, and receiving recommendations on future amendments to state dual credit policies.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.600 RCW to read as follows:

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

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the statewide and 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 public high schools;

(b) Aligning career and technical education dual credit programs with 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 dual credits and updating transcripts;

(d) Providing professional development for staff of public high schools and 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 in course curriculum alignment for career and technical education dual credit courses;

(iii) Partnering with institutions of higher education to develop 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, the following definitions apply:

(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.

(2) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, 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 and expiration dates;

(c) Create searchable fields for course titles;

(d) Improve student account verification; and

(e) Add data validation features.

(3) 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.

(4) By October 1, 2026, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the state board for community and technical colleges shall report to the appropriate committees of the legislature with the plan and 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.

(5) This section expires August 1, 2027.

**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) The college board shall create, and publish on its website, articulation agreements for statewide career and technical education dual credit courses. A multiyear work plan must be published on its website and updated biannually. These activities must be conducted in collaboration with the office of the superintendent of public instruction and other relevant stakeholders.

(b) The statewide articulation agreements for the five most common career and technical education dual credit courses in high-demand program areas must be created and published by December 1, 2026.

(c) 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 state board for community and technical colleges, in consultation with the office of the superintendent of public instruction, 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 June 30, 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;

(c) Findings on costs related to career and technical education dual credit, including the costs to both students and districts associated with the fees for transcription and administration currently charged by colleges, including the identification of individual fees, consortia fees, and total costs; and

(d) 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) Aligning career and technical education dual credit with career-connected learning, apprenticeship, and credential pathways; and

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

(3) The final report must provide recommendations for future changes to state dual credit policies. These recommendations must include:

(a) Potential statutory changes;

(b) Suggestions for administrative rule improvements;

(c) Strategies to offset the costs to students, including the cost of required examination or testing fees associated with obtaining state or industry certification in the student's career and technical education program;

(d) Further approaches for supporting equitable student access to a variety of dual credit programs statewide; and

(e) Further approaches for supporting the effectiveness of a variety of dual credit programs statewide.

(4) This section expires August 1, 2027.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.320 RCW to read as follows:

School districts and public high schools shall collaborate with the state board for community and technical colleges, office of the superintendent of public instruction, educational service districts, and other specified entities to streamline statewide and 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 state board for community and technical colleges, office of the superintendent of public instruction, and other specified entities to streamline statewide and 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.310 RCW to read as follows:

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

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