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## Labor & Workforce Development Committee

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### HB 2170

**Brief Description:** Enacting the career pathways act.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Probst, Rivers, Hansen, Sells, Jinkins, Ryu, Ladenburg, Tharinger, Warnick, Maxwell, McCoy, Goodman, Springer, Appleton, Kenney, Roberts, Kirby, Green, Wylie, Ormsby and Orwall.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- States findings and intent related to multiple career pathways to marketable job skills and productive careers.
- For career exploration and multiple career pathways, requires provision of information about such pathways, employment prospects, and earnings; development of programs of study; identification of online career exploration tools and development of an online mentor program; designation of career exploration partnership zones; and inclusion of career and technical education in basic education.
- For coordination of career pathway and opportunity programs, requires coordination to eliminate duplication and barriers; modifies eligibility requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship Program and the Opportunity Internship Program; and requires development of an employee benefit account proposal.
- For secondary and postsecondary guidance and career pathways, encourages use of career pathway options in guidance and planning programs; modifies compulsory coursework and High School and Beyond plans; encourages career counseling at institutions of higher education; and requires I-BEST at community and technical colleges.

**Hearing Date:** 1/19/12

**Staff:** Jill Reinmuth (786-7134).

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

## **Background:**

### 1. Career Exploration and Multiple Career Pathways.

*Multiple Pathways.* The state's comprehensive plan for workforce training entitled "High Skills, High Wages 2008 – 2018" identifies four objectives in achieving the goal of ensuring that "all youth receive the education, training, and support they need for success in postsecondary education and/or work." One of these objectives is that "all students leave high school prepared for success in further education and/or work." The latest annual progress report from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board to the Legislature includes a long term goal that "no later than 2018 all high school students across Washington have the option to complete a career and technical education sequence that matches their career interests, articulates with postsecondary education, and results in industry certification where applicable." Steps related to achieving this goal include: developing statewide programs of study; fostering an education system that supports multiple pathways; and having graduation requirements that accommodate a career-focused high school education. A recent report entitled "Pathways to Prosperity: Meeting the Challenge of Preparing Young Americans for the 21st Century" from the Harvard Graduate School of Education also argues for multiple pathways to success with increased work-based learning for students.

*Basic Education.* The Program of Basic Education is defined as that which is necessary to provide students the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the high school graduation requirements, which are established by the State Board of Education. The graduation requirements are intended to allow students the opportunity to graduate with a diploma that prepares them for postsecondary education, gainful employment, and citizenship.

*Course Equivalencies.* School districts must adopt course equivalencies for career and technical education and academic courses.

*School-to-Work.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must facilitate the development of programs for school-to-work transition that combine classroom education and on-the-job training in certain industries and occupations.

### 2. Coordination of Career Pathway and Opportunity Programs.

*Career Pathway and Opportunity Programs.* Various programs provide financial aid or other assistance for eligible students to obtain education and training. These programs include: the Opportunity Internship Program, which offers paid and unpaid internships for low-income students to gain work experience in targeted, in-demand industries; and the Opportunity Scholarship Program, which offers scholarships for low- and middle-income students studying for degrees in high-demand fields.

### 3. Secondary and Postsecondary Career Guidance and Career Pathways.

*Career and Technical Education.* The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and various agencies work with local schools and institutions of higher education to develop model career and technical education programs of study. Model programs must lead to an industry

credential or an associate or baccalaureate degree. New model programs must be developed with a priority on high-demand programs.

*Guidance and Planning Programs.* School districts are encouraged to offer comprehensive guidance and planning programs that include certain components, such as a curriculum to help students plan for their futures, regular meetings with advisors, and student-led conferences with advisors and parents.

*High School Graduation Requirements.* The State Board of Education (SBE) must reevaluate graduation requirements for career and technical education programs to ensure that students have sufficient opportunity to earn the program's certificate or credential and complete other graduation requirements. The SBE requires students to complete a High School and Beyond Plan for graduation, but the content is determined by local districts.

*Educational Pathways.* Middle, junior high, and high schools using educational pathways must ensure that participating students continue to have access to courses and instruction necessary to meet admission requirements at baccalaureate institutions. Educational pathways include worksite learning, internships, tech prep, and career and technical education.

*Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training.* Integrated basic education and skills training (I-BEST) pairs workforce training and adult basic education (ABE) or English as a Second Language (ESL). Students learn basic skills while learning workplace skills.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### 1. Findings and Intent.

*Multiple Career Pathways.* The Legislature finds that multiple pathways lead to marketable job skills and productive careers, and intends that the state become the fastest-growing supplier of highly skilled workers for targeted industries.

*Middle-Income Bracket.* The Legislature also adopts a goal of increasing the percentage of Washington households living in the middle-income bracket, and a strategy of increasing the number of secondary and postsecondary program graduates and completers, especially in fields with high economic demand.

*Strategic Plans.* Certain agencies are required to incorporate this goal and strategy into their strategic plans and include additional appropriate strategies in their plans for reaching this goal. These agencies include: the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Higher Education Coordinating Board or its successor, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, and the Employment Security Department (collectively, "state education and workforce agencies") as well as the Department of Commerce, the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council, and the Department of Social and Health Services.

##### 2. Career Exploration and Multiple Career Pathways.

*Definitions.* Various terms are defined. A "career pathway" is a series of coordinated education and training programs and support services aligned with a career cluster. A "program of study" is a coordinated, non-duplicative progression of courses within a career pathway that aligns academic and career and technical education in secondary education with post-secondary education.

*Multiple Career Pathways.* State education and workforce agencies must include information about multiple career pathways in materials and communications regarding career opportunities or career exploration. The State Board of Education must illustrate options and strategies for students to pursue multiple career pathways in materials and communications regarding high school graduation requirements. School districts must provide information to students in grades 6 through 12 about multiple career pathways in newsletters and websites.

*Employment Prospects and Earnings.* State education and workforce agencies must provide information about employment prospects and earnings for apprenticeships in analyses comparing such information for high school graduates, two-year degrees, or baccalaureate degrees. They also must disaggregate such information about two-year and baccalaureate degrees by academic major or by major academic unit in such analyses.

*Online Career Exploration Tools.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) must identify online career exploration tools for exploring multiple pathways. The Workforce Board also must create annually a list of promising careers. Along with the Workforce Board, state education and workforce agencies, public institutions of higher education, WorkSource centers, and public libraries must publicize the online tools and promising careers. School districts must provide information to students in grades 6 through 12.

*Online Mentor Program.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must work with statewide business organizations to develop an online volunteer mentor program supported by business organizations or foundations.

*Career Exploration Partnership Zone.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must develop criteria and an application process for designating regional coordinators for between eight and 12 career exploration partnership zones, as well as performance monitoring reports. The regional coordinators must: serve as clearinghouses for youth employment opportunities; develop internship, mentoring, and advising opportunities; encourage students to use the online tools and online mentor program; and seek public and private sector funding.

*Basic Education.* The definition of "basic education" is amended to describe "postsecondary education" as including pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, workforce training programs, community and technical colleges, and baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate opportunities. As part of basic education, school districts must offer programs in career and technical education that prepare students for postsecondary education.

*Course Equivalencies.* School districts may not prohibit students from enrolling in career and technical course equivalencies if they have not been successful in equivalent academic courses.

*Programs of Study.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (Workforce Board) must facilitate the development of programs of study. Along with other agencies, the

Workforce Board must work with local school districts, community and technical colleges, and four-year institutions to: develop model programs of study within career pathways; maximize opportunities to benefit from dual credit programs, articulation agreements, and prior learning assessments; and expand opportunities for work-based learning. Programs of study replace programs for school-to-work transition.

3. Coordination of Career Pathway and Opportunity Programs.

*Coordination.* State education and workforce agencies must work together to ensure that certain programs operate seamlessly. These programs include: Opportunity Scholarships, Opportunity Internships, and Opportunity Grants, as well as programs supported by the Opportunity Express Account, the College Bound Scholarship, and the Pay for Actual Student Success (PASS) Program.

*Opportunity Pathways Account.* Authorized expenditures from the Opportunity Pathways Account are modified to include the Opportunity Scholarship Program, the Opportunity Internship Program, and programs supported by the Opportunity Express Account.

*Opportunity Scholarships.* Eligibility requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship Program are modified to eliminate the requirement that an eligible student intend to transfer to a four-year institution to earn a baccalaureate degree. Also, eligible students who are Opportunity Internship graduates must be awarded Opportunity Scholarships when they graduate from high school or complete a GED, to the extent funds are available.

*Opportunity Internships.* Eligibility requirements for the Opportunity Internship Program are modified to include students who qualify for a State Need Grant or the Workforce Investment Act Title I-B Youth Program, and also those who receive a GED. The Higher Education Coordinating Board must notify graduates of their eligibility to receive a State Need Grant. Consortia are encouraged to provide stipends or financial incentives for internship and preapprenticeship completion. The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must report on whether the Opportunity Internship Program's performance warrants expanding participation to include students from middle-income families.

*Continuing Education and Training Accounts.* The Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board must develop a proposal to establish employee benefit accounts for continuing education and training that employers may offer and that may be funded by employer, employee, and state contributions. The report must be submitted by December 1, 2012.

4. Secondary and Postsecondary Career Guidance and Career Pathways.

*Guidance and Planning Programs.* The components of comprehensive guidance and planning programs are modified to include student planning portfolios and student-driven scheduling of courses. School districts are encouraged to use a curriculum that includes exploration of career pathway options, opportunities for career and technical education, and pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships, as well as exploration of multiple career pathways in emerging and high-demand programs.

*High School Graduation Requirements.* The State Board of Education must ensure that graduation requirements provide students whose plans do not include immediate baccalaureate entrance to complete a program of study and other graduation requirements, without waivers, permissions, or other additional administrative requirements or procedures.

*High School and Beyond Plans.* School districts are encouraged to have middle, junior high, and high school students develop High School and Beyond plans with specified components. The plans should include: a four-year plan for course-taking, including selecting a program of study; research, site visits, and an application for postsecondary education; and preparation of a resume.

*Career Pathways.* Public high schools are encouraged to offer multiple high school programs of study within career pathways. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must develop model frameworks for high school programs of study within career pathways. High school work-based learning is defined as including a wide range of activities.

*Teaching Certification.* The Professional Educator Standards Board must include in standards for teaching certification the requisite skills and knowledge to offer contextualized learning activities.

*Career Counseling.* Institutions of higher education are encouraged to offer comprehensive career counseling for all students and to develop partnerships with WorkSource agencies to offer counseling services.

*Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST).* Community and technical colleges must offer I-BEST programs for students requiring basic skills and literacy.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 18, 2012.

**Effective Date:** This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for sections 308, 309, and 310, relating to certain aspects of the Opportunity Internship Program, which take effect July 1, 2012.