
Higher Education Committee

HB 2396

Brief Description: Addressing barriers for students to participate in the running start program.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Bergquist, Seaquist, Ryu, Roberts, Riccelli, Tarleton, Gregerson, Pollet and Habib.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Washington Student Achievement Council to conduct an analysis of the program and to submit a report to the Legislature by January 1, 2015.
- Requires certain school districts to meet with higher education institutions in their district that have over fifty Running Start students and to develop participation plans to increase enrollment of underrepresented students in the program.
- Requires the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to collect current demographic data and to compare it with data collected after two years of collaboration and to submit a report to the Legislature by December 1, 2017.

Hearing Date: 1/22/14

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

The Running Start program, administered by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), allows high school juniors and seniors to enroll in college courses for dual credit. Institutions of higher education test high school students' college readiness before the students are admitted to the program.

Students in the program pay no tuition, but do pay for educational materials, course fees, and transportation costs. The school districts pay the institutions of higher education an amount equal to the statewide average basic education allocation, minus 7 percent, which is retained by the districts.

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.

In the fall of 2013 18,698 students participated in the program, primarily through community or technical colleges.

The Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC) is a state agency that provides strategic planning, oversight, and advocacy to support increased student success and higher levels of educational attainment in the state of Washington.

Summary of Bill:

Student Achievement Council Report.

The WSAC must conduct an analysis of the program, including barriers to participation, degree completion outcomes, and best practices. The WSAC must submit its report to the Legislature by January 1, 2015. This section expires August 1, 2015.

Participation Plan Development and Reporting.

Certain school districts must meet with higher education institutions within their district that have over fifty Running Start students to develop participation plans to increase enrollment of underrepresented students in the program and submit the plans to the OSPI by November 1, 2014. Plans must include a focus on:

- identifying and implementing strategies to provide outreach regarding the program to underrepresented populations at middle schools and high schools to ensure that students and families have information on the Running Start program; and
- ensuring better coordination between middle schools, high schools, and participating Running Start institutions to provide academic guidance to students who have been underrepresented in the program.

By January 1, 2015, the OSPI must provide the Legislature guidelines for improving outreach to students who have been underrepresented in the program and for collaboration among schools based on the participation plans.

The OSPI must collect current demographic data on student participation in the Running Start program and compare it with data collected after two years of school district collaboration with participating institutions. The OSPI must submit this report to the Legislature by December 1, 2017.

This section expires August 1, 2018.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.