

HOUSE BILL REPORT

E2SSB 5243

As Reported by House Committee On: Education

Title: An act relating to establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.

Brief Description: Establishing policies to support academic acceleration for high school students.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Ways & Means (originally sponsored by Senators Litzow, Dammeier, Tom, Harper, Hobbs, Delvin, Hewitt, Padden, Mullet and Shin).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 3/15/13, 3/26/13 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Second Substitute Bill (As Amended by Committee)

- Encourages school districts to adopt a policy to automatically enroll a student who meets the standard on the high school state assessments or the Preliminary SAT in the next most rigorous advanced course in that subject, with the objective that students eventually enroll in dual credit courses.
- Provides an incentive award to high schools based on student performance in specified dual credit courses, if funding is appropriated.
- Creates a program to allocate one-time grants to high schools on a competitive basis to expand availability of dual credit courses, if funding is appropriated.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Dahlquist, Ranking Minority Member; Magendanz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Fagan, Haigh, Hargrove, Hawkins, Hayes, Klippert, Lytton, Maxwell, McCoy, Orwall, Pike, Seaquist and Warnick.

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.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Hunt and Pollet.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

There are a number of different programs that provide high school students the opportunity to earn both high school and college credit. For example:

1. Advanced Placement (AP) courses are recognized by the College Board as having college-level curricula. Most colleges and universities award students college credit for achieving a certain score on the AP course exam.
2. International Baccalaureate (IB) is a series of academically rigorous courses, activities, and examinations. Students may take individual courses, or attempt to complete an IB diploma based on the full program. Like the AP, colleges and universities award credit based on exam scores.
3. The Cambridge Program is similar to the IB in offering an internationally recognized rigorous set of courses and examinations.
4. College in the High School is a program in which a high school and a college or university enter into a contract to have a course that is taught by a high school teacher generate college credit. Whether the student or the high school pays the tuition for the course depends on the contract.
5. Tech Prep offers students the opportunity to apply to a community or technical college to have high school career and technical education (CTE) courses recognized for college credit.
6. Running Start is a program where high school students may enroll in a participating public institution of higher education in Washington and earn both high school and college credit. For the most part, students attend class on the college campus. State funding is transferred from the high school to the college in lieu of tuition.

The following data is from the 2011-12 Dual Credit Program report from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI):

Program	# Schools	# Students
Advanced Placement	304	47,565
International Baccalaureate	15	5,696
Cambridge Program	2	1,138
College in the High School	112	12,742
Tech Prep (Dual Credit Earned)	379	28,946
Running Start	440	17,505

The OSPI posts information about dual credit program enrollment by school district and high school on the School Report Card website. The information does not indicate pass-rates on program examinations.

The statewide assessment system measures whether a student meets the state learning standard in a particular subject area. High school students take state assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The state standard for mathematics is measured using an end-of-course test in Algebra I and Geometry. The standard for science is measured using an end-of-course test in Biology. The reading and writing assessments are administered in 10th grade.

The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) is a national test that measures student reading, writing, and mathematical problem-solving skills. The PSAT scores can be used to identify a student's readiness for advanced and college-level courses, including AP courses.

Summary of Amended Bill:

Academic Acceleration Policy.

Each school district is encouraged to adopt an Academic Acceleration Policy where students who meet the state standard on the high school state assessment or meet a district-established score on the PSAT are automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous advanced course offered by the high school. Students who are successful in that course are then automatically enrolled in the next most rigorous course, with the objective that these students will eventually be automatically enrolled in dual credit courses.

The subject of the course depends on the subject of the state assessment or the subject area of the PSAT. Students must pass end-of-course tests in both Algebra I and Geometry to meet the standard in mathematics. Students who meet the standard in reading and writing qualify for advanced English, Social Studies, Humanities, and other related courses.

School districts must notify students and parents about the Academic Acceleration policy, and must provide parents an opportunity to opt out and enroll the student in alternative courses.

Academic Acceleration Incentive Program.

Subject to funding, the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program is created. Half of the appropriated funds are allocated on a competitive basis as one-time grants for high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses. To be eligible, a school district must have adopted an Academic Acceleration Policy. The OSPI must give priority to high schools with a high proportion of low-income students and high schools seeking to develop new capacity for dual credit courses.

The other half of the appropriated funds are allocated as an incentive award to school districts for each student who earned dual credit in specified courses offered by a high school in the previous year. The amount of the award for low-income students is 125 percent of the base amount. Each student counts once, even if they earned more than one credit. The

award must go to the high school that generated it. The Legislature intends that the funds be used to support teacher training, curricula, exam fees, and other costs of dual credit courses.

The award or grant is based on the number of students who:

- earned a score of three or higher on an AP exam;
- earned a score of four or higher on an IB exam;
- successfully completed a Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education exam;
- earned college credit through a College in the High School course; or
- earned college credit through a Tech Prep course.

Online dual credit courses count if the high school offers them at no charge to the student. Enrollment in Running Start does not count toward a grant or award.

The OSPI must include information on dual credit exam pass-rates and college credits awarded in the School Report Card.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Second Substitute Bill:

The amended bill encourages school districts rather than requiring them to adopt an Academic Acceleration Policy. The Incentive Program is changed so that half of the funds are to provide grants to expand availability of dual credit courses in high schools that have adopted the Academic Acceleration Policy, with a priority for low-income schools and schools seeking to develop new capacity. The other half of the funds are for awards to high schools based on overall dual credit enrollment, not including enrollment in Running Start. The Incentive Program in the underlying bill provided grants based on the lowest 25 percent of high schools in terms of their dual credit enrollment and awards based on the top 10 percent of high schools in terms of growth in dual credit enrollment, including enrollment in Running Start. A null and void clause is added to the Incentive Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available.

Effective Date of Amended Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, section 3, establishing the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program, is null and void unless funded in the budget.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) All supporters of education are headed toward the same goal, which is to make kids more successful. The graduation rate is only 74 percent, which means the system is failing a lot of kids, and many of those are students of color. There is no silver bullet and no perfect bill. There is an urgent need for diversity in highly capable classes. Too few black and brown students are allowed in. Enrollment of these students must be mandatory.

The community has worked hard to bring the IB Program to Rainier Beach High School. The concern is that the program will draw students from elsewhere in the city, and students of color will not be provided access to the accelerated programs. Schools have an obligation to educate all children, not just an elite group.

Even a small, low-income, rural, mostly Hispanic school district offers a plethora of advanced courses. What is needed is support for students in those courses. High schools must have a belief that they can reach every student. That is the basic premise of a democratic society.

The reason the policy is mandatory is that discrimination is contributing to the achievement gap. This would require that students who are ready for advanced coursework must be placed in those courses regardless of who they are. If school districts are given an option, they will also have the option not to have a difficult conversation. The bill does not require high schools immediately to expand their course offerings; they can place students in whatever advanced courses they have available.

The Senate version is preferred. Districts have had decades to do this voluntarily. Some have, and some have not. Black and brown students are seriously underrepresented in AP courses, IB programs, and Cambridge. There needs to be a belief that kids can do anything if they are supported.

(With concerns) The more permissive nature of the House bill is preferred. School districts are doing many things to support rigor and advanced courses already without a mandate. The House bill also focuses the incentive program on low-income students. There is a need for seed money for those high schools.

(Opposed) Advanced courses are too narrowly defined. Any course should be considered a rigorous course, and access should not be limited to those who pass the state assessment. Students are enrolled in Project Lead the Way and Advanced Manufacturing. This bill would require pulling those students out of courses they are excited about and putting them into AP courses. The House version that allows rather than requires schools to do this is supported. Incentives on the front end to enable more staff to be trained to offer advanced courses would be more effective.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Senator Litzow, prime sponsor; Don Davis, African Methodist Episcopal Church; Sebrena Burr, Parent Teacher Student Association; Carol Solomon, Black Education Strategy Roundtable; Kevin Chase, Grandview School District; Rick Linehan, Chewelah School District; Dave Powell, Stand for Children; and Rosalund Jenkins, League of Education Voters and Black Education Strategy Roundtable.

(With concerns) Marie Sullivan, Washington State School Directors' Association.

(Opposed) Gene Sementi, West Valley School District; and Jerry Bender, Association of Washington School Principals.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.