

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1202

As Passed Legislature

Title: An act relating to high school credit equivalencies.

Brief Description: Adopting the recommendations of the task force examining high school credit equivalencies.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Dickerson, Poulsen, Smith, O'Brien, Costa, Ogden and Mason).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/28/97, 2/13/97 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/97, 96-0.

Passed Legislature.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Johnson, Chairman; Hickel, Vice Chairman; Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Linville; Quall; Smith; Sterk; Sump; Talcott and Veloria.

Staff: Joe Hauth (786-7111).

Background: The Legislature has directed the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish minimum high school graduation requirements or equivalencies. The SBE originally defined one high school credit as 150 hours of planned in-school instruction, or five quarter or three semester hours of college or university level course work.

A high school student will normally earn six high school credits annually. A high school student attending college full-time would earn nine high school credits.

In 1993, the SBE modified the definition of high school credit equivalencies. Under the new definition, .75 high school credits is equal to five quarter or three semester hours of college or university level course work. A high school student attending college full-time will earn 6.75 high school credits. The SBE has delayed implementing the new conversion rate until September 1997.

In 1994, the Legislature directed the SBE and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to convene a task force on curriculum issues, and to develop recommendations regarding credit equivalencies by December 1994. The task force recommended unanimously that the SBE maintain the definition that one high school credit is equal to five quarter or three semester hours of college or university level course work.

Summary of Bill: Credit equivalency is defined. One high school credit equals five quarter or three semester hours at the college or university level.

The obsolete requirement for the task force to report recommendations on credit equivalencies by December 1994 is deleted.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Students need a permanent credit equivalency standard. Additional funding is needed to make the Running Start Program work as intended.

Testimony Against: The credit equivalency standard as proposed is a good concept. The decision on credit equivalency, however, should be left to the discretion of the State Board of Education.

Testified: Representative Quall, prime sponsor; Larry Davis, State Board of Education (con); and Ron Crossland, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (supports concept).