

FINAL BILL REPORT

SHB 1977

C 63 L 98

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Allowing arrangements for running start students to attend out-of-state community colleges.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Honeyford, Boldt and Dunn).

House Committee on Education
Senate Committee on Education

Background: The 1990 Legislature created the Running Start program as part of the "Learning by Choice" law. The law was designed to expand educational options for students in public high schools. Through Running Start, qualified 11th and 12th grade students may take college level courses in any of the state's 32 community and technical colleges. Running Start students earn both high school and college credit for successfully completed college courses. About 5 percent of Washington's public high school students are enrolled in Running Start.

The 1994 Legislature expanded the program to include Central, Eastern, and Washington State universities. One reason for the expansion is to provide high school students with additional educational opportunities in communities in which no community college or technical college is located. School districts may choose whether to permit their students to attend the three participating state universities.

Running Start students are not charged tuition. However, they must provide their own transportation, books, and class materials. The school districts in which the students are enrolled must reimburse the colleges and universities for their students' participation in the program. The rate for reimbursement is uniform statewide. In 1996, the reimbursement rate was about \$79 per credit for academic programs and \$95 for vocational programs. School districts retain 7 percent of the funds for counseling and other overhead expenses.

Summary: School districts in Washington may enter into agreements with community colleges in Oregon and Idaho to let Washington students enroll in the community colleges for concurrent high school and college credit. If a school district enters into an agreement, most of the provisions of the Running Start laws will apply.

School districts may pay the community colleges less than the Running Start rate per credit as long as students are not required to pay tuition and fees, but they may not pay more than the Running Start rate per credit. Agreements may require students to pay some tuition and fees, however, the agreements may not allow the colleges to charge students nonresident tuition rates. The agreements must also ensure that participating students enroll in courses that transfer to a public college or university in Washington.

Votes on Final Passage:

House 95 1

Senate 44 4

Effective: June 11, 1998