

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6411

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2002

Title: An act relating to the participation in the running start program by institutions of higher education.

Brief Description: Expanding the running start program to allow participation by The Evergreen State College.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe, Carlson, B. Sheldon, Regala, Shin, Finkbeiner and Fraser; by request of The Evergreen State College.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Higher Education: 1/29/02, 2/5/02 [DP].

Passed Senate: 2/18/02, 43-4.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Kohl-Welles, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Carlson, Horn, Jacobsen, McAuliffe, Parlette, Sheahan and B. Sheldon.

Staff: Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

Background: In Washington, under the Running Start program, eleventh and twelfth grade students or students who have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent but are eligible to be in the eleventh or twelfth grades can apply to participating higher education institutions to enroll in courses or programs at the institution and earn high school and college credit simultaneously. The Running Start program was initiated in 1990 and since its implementation, 72,059 students have participated in the program. Of those students, 3,017 have graduated from high school with both a diploma and an Associate of Arts degree. Most students who participate in Running Start earn approximately one year's worth of college course credit by the time the student graduates from high school. Under current law, participating four-year institutions include Central Washington University, Eastern Washington University and Washington State University.

Summary of Bill: The Evergreen State College is added to the list of participating four-year institutions.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2002.

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

Testimony For: This is the first step in helping students who want to take advantage of college credit and in helping TESC build a stronger relationship with the K-12 system. A growing number of students are wanting this option and allowing TESC to participate can help take some of the pressure off the community colleges in the area. TESC is currently working with the faculty to ensure that there will not be any displacement problems and working to figure out how to tailor the curriculum to students' needs.

Testimony Against: While Running Start is a valuable program, it has had a negative impact on some high schools around the state. There are competition for funds issues. Additionally, there is hesitance about expanding the program to more four-year institutions at this time. There are a lot of issues surrounding such things as the certificate of mastery and other graduation requirements that need to be addressed and resolved first. Schools are working hard to make kids accountable and to do that, they need some incentives such as requiring passage of the certificate of mastery prior to being eligible for Running Start.

Testified: PRO: Les Purce, Edie Harding, TESC; CON: Rainer Houser, AWSP; Robert Butts, OSPI.