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## Education Committee

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### HB 3025

**Brief Description:** Establishing an alternative route to a high school diploma.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Quall, Haigh, Probst, Ormsby, Wallace, Kenney and Santos.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Awards a high school diploma to students who complete the minimum course requirements for admission to a public four-year institution of higher education as established by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, attain at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average in those courses, and complete a culminating project and a high school and beyond plan.
- Does not require these students to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement or a Certificate of Individual Achievement.

**Hearing Date:** 1/26/10

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

#### **Background:**

##### High School Graduation.

The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes minimum requirements for high school graduation. The current requirements are 19 credits among a specified distribution of subjects, a culminating project, and a high school and beyond plan.

The credit distribution for graduation is as follows:

- English 3.0 credits
- Mathematics 2.0 credits
- Science 2.0 credits, including one laboratory science
- Social Studies 2.5 credits, including one in U.S. History, .5 in Washington State History, and one in Contemporary World Problems
- Health and Fitness 2.0 credits

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- Arts 1.0 credit
- Occupational Education 1.0 credit
- Electives 5.5 credits

Beginning with the class of 2013, students must earn an additional credit in mathematics, and, with certain exceptions, the credit must be in Algebra II or an equivalent.

The SBE has proposed to move to a 24 credit minimum. Legislation enacted in 2009 requires school districts, as part of their basic education program, to provide students with the opportunity to complete 24 credits, based on courses specified by the SBE. Future changes in the minimum requirements will need to be reviewed by the Legislature before they are adopted by the SBE.

In addition, students are required to earn either a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) based on their performance on statewide assessments of reading, writing, and mathematics. There is a temporary exception through the class of 2012 that authorizes graduation without a CAA or a CIA if the student has not met the state standard on the mathematics assessment but fulfills other specified requirements.

Local school districts can adopt additional requirements.

#### Minimum College Admission.

The Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) establishes minimum criteria for admission to a public four-year institution of higher education. In 2007, the HECB adopted new criteria which were subsequently revised in 2009 and will take effect in 2012. In addition to earning 15 credits among a specified distribution of courses, students must attain a minimum cumulative grade point average for all high school courses of 2.0 on a 4.0 point scale.

The College Academic Distribution Requirements (CADR) through 2011 are as follows:

- English 4 credits, including three credits of literature and composition.
- Mathematics 3 credits, including algebra, geometry, and advanced math.
- Science 2 credits, which must be laboratory science. One credit must also be algebra-based science and one credit must be biology, chemistry, or physics (which can also be the algebra-based course).
- World Languages 2 credits of the same language
- Social Science 3 credits
- Arts 1 credit, or an elective from one of the other CADR subjects.

Beginning in 2012, the English requirement is that at least three of the four credits are in college preparatory composition or literature. Meeting the state standard on the high school reading assessment is worth two credits. Also in 2012, the mathematics requirement is for credits in algebra I, geometry, and algebra II, or an equivalent integrated math series. Meeting the state standard on the high school mathematics assessment is worth the first two credits. Mathematics through pre-calculus equals three credits. Students must take a math-based quantitative course in the senior year.

Achievement of the minimum criteria does not guarantee admission. Higher education institutions can impose additional minimum criteria, and all have a comprehensive review process for consideration of applicants.

**Summary of Bill:**

As an alternative to other high school graduation requirements (state or local), any student who meets the following requirements receives a high school diploma:

- successfully completes the minimum number of credits and the College Academic Distribution Requirements for admission to a public four-year college or university, as adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB);
- earns a cumulative average grade of at least 3.0 for the required courses; and
- completes a culminating project and a high school and beyond plan under rules established by the State Board of Education (SBE).

As part of their basic education program, school districts must offer students the opportunity to complete their choice of the credits required for graduation by the SBE or credits that meet the HECB minimum college admission standards.

Students who meet these alternative requirements are not required to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement or Certificate of Individual Achievement to earn a diploma.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 21, 2010.

**Effective Date:** Section 9 of the bill dealing with the basic education program takes effect September 1, 2011. The remainder of the bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.