

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2656

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to concurrent enrollment programs and college preparatory with examination programs.

Brief Description: Concerning concurrent enrollment programs and college preparatory with examination programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Orwall, Stambaugh, Tarleton, Haler, Pollet, Van Werven, Dolan and Sells.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/16/18, 1/31/18 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the public institutions of higher education to establish coordinated, evidenced-based policies for awarding college credits to students who successfully complete Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge International examinations.
- Requires any college or university offering concurrent enrollment programs to public high schools or under the College in the High School program to be accredited by a national accrediting body for concurrent enrollment by the 2024-25 school year.
- Establishes a workgroup to address opportunities and challenges related to dual credit programs.
- Establishes a workgroup through the Education Research and Data Center to address statewide dual credit data.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives Hansen, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Orwall, Sells, Stambaugh and Tarleton.

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 Holy, Ranking Minority Member; Van Werven, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Megan Mulvihill (786-7304).

Background:

Dual credit programs allow high school students to earn post secondary course credit while also earning credit toward high school graduation. Dual credit programs include those in which students enroll in college-level courses while still in high school, such as Running Start (RS), College in the High School (CHS), and Career Technical Education (CTE), and courses considered more rigorous than traditional high school courses, in which students may demonstrate competency through examination. Students who score well on their examinations may earn college credit or have the option to opt-out of an introductory college course. National examinations include options such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Cambridge International. According to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's Washington State Report Card, in 2015-16 there were the following numbers of student enrolled in dual credit courses:

- 23,304 RS;
- 22,534 CHS;
- 114,842 CTE;
- 62,627 AP;
- 8,223 IB; and
- 1,070 Cambridge International.

International Baccalaureate.

The IB Diploma Programme is a two-year university preparation program for students aged 16 to 19. Students in the Diploma Programme participate in a compulsory core, and take classes in six subject groups. The IB courses are offered at either standard level (SL) or higher level (HL). The HL courses are comprised of 240 teaching hours whereas SL courses are 150 teaching hours. Students must pass an examination at the end of each course. The scoring for these examinations is a range of one to seven points. Students earn an IB diploma if they meet the minimum requirements of the program, including completing the core program and earning at least 24 points across the six subject examinations with a minimum score of three in at least four subjects. However, not all students seek to earn an IB diploma and many take individual IB classes.

Cambridge International A Level.

Cambridge International Advanced are programs for students aged 16 to 19. Programs are offered in 55 different subjects in either AS or A level. Cambridge International AS is typically a one-year program, while Cambridge International A level is two-years. The A level examinations at the end of a course are graded on a scale of A* through E.

Advanced Placement.

The AP program is administered by the College Board and offers around 40 AP classes. The AP classes are considered college-level courses, but are taught in high school. At the end of an AP class, an exam is issued to students in May each year to measure their preparedness.

The exams are usually a combination of multiple choice and free-response questions, and the scores range from one to five.

During the 2017 Legislative Session, Engrossed Senate Bill 5234 was enacted and requires the institutions of higher education (IHE) to establish a coordinated, evidence-based policy for granting undergraduate college credits to students who earn minimum scores of three on AP examinations. The IHEs are required to post the policy on campus websites effective for the 2017 fall academic term and conduct reviews of the policy and report noncompliance in annual reports to the Legislature beginning November 1, 2019. Each IHE has its own policy for how to award credit for IB and Cambridge International examinations. Some of the IHEs only award college credit for higher level IB and Cambridge International A Level examinations, and some provide more credits to students who earned the IB diploma.

College in the High School.

College in the High School (CHS) programs provide college level courses in high schools to qualified grade 11 and grade 12 high school students, or students who have not yet received a high school diploma or equivalent but are eligible for grades 11 or 12. The CHS programs are defined in contract between a high school and a college or university. The CHS program contracts must, among other things, define the criteria for a student's eligibility for the program, specify whether the student or the high school pays for tuition fees, state that students who successfully complete a CHS program course receive both high school credit and college credit, and provide general information about the CHS program to students in grades 10 through 12. A CHS course must fulfill general or major requirements at participating IHEs.

Running Start Programs.

The RS students enroll in courses or programs offered by participating IHEs. Students take RS courses on the campus of the IHE and online. Some IHEs and school districts also offer RS courses in the high school. The high school students do not pay tuition for RS classes but may be charged fees.

Career Technical Education.

The CTE program, formerly known as Tech Prep, creates career pathways for high school students through classes which integrate academics with technical skills. The classes are taught at the high school or in a skills center, and a student earns both high school and college credit. The classes must either lead to a professional-technical two-year degree, certificate, or apprenticeship; lead to employment or further education; or provide technical preparation in a field such as agriculture or information technology.

National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships.

The National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP) is the sole accrediting body for concurrent enrollment partnerships. The NACEP works to ensure that college courses offered by high school teachers are as rigorous as courses offered by the sponsoring college campus. Many of Washington's colleges and universities are members of the NACEP, but only two have NACEP-accredited concurrent enrollment programs: the University of Washington and Everett Community College. The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction requires that IHEs participating in CHS either be accredited by the NACEP or submit annual reports of evidence that the required standards were met.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Dual Credit Definitions.

"College preparatory programs with examination" is defined as high school courses for which students may earn college credit through recognized standardized examinations, such as AP, IB, and Cambridge International A levels.

"Concurrent enrollment programs" are defined as partnerships between K-12 schools and post secondary education institutions through which credit-bearing college courses are offered by a public or private IHE and taught by higher education faculty or appropriately qualified high school teachers, are taken by high school students who have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high school diploma, either in high school or at a public or private institution of higher education, and for which earned credits are recorded on a college or university transcript, with the exception of CTE dual credit. The CTE dual credit is a concurrent enrollment program; however, credits earned through CTE dual credit may not be recorded on a college transcript until a student enrolls in a public or private IHE.

College Preparatory Programs with Examination Credit Policies.

The public IHEs are required to establish coordinated, evidence-based policies for granting as many undergraduate college credits as possible and appropriate for general education requirements or the equivalent to students who successfully complete AP, IB, or Cambridge International courses, as demonstrated by the student's examination score. The institutions must take into account evidence for student success and relevant curriculum and test scores for AP, IB, and Cambridge International in consideration of granting college credit or waiving course requirements. Examples of credit policies are provided, such as whether a three or four on an AP examination, a four or a five on a standard level or higher level IB examination, and an equivalent score on a Cambridge International examination indicates that the student has mastered college-level coursework for which college credit may be granted. The credit policies must be posted on campus websites effective for the 2018 fall academic term.

Concurrent Enrollment Program Accreditation Requirements.

Any college or university offering concurrent enrollment program courses at a public high school or under the CHS program must receive accreditation by a national accrediting body for concurrent enrollment by the 2024-25 school year. Those colleges and universities engaged in concurrent enrollment program courses at public high schools or under the CHS program on or before the 2017-18 academic year that are not accredited must continue to undergo the annual state authorization review by the CHS Standards Report Committee until accredited. After the 2024-25 school year, any college or university not accredited or without an active application pending may not offer a concurrent enrollment program course. New college or university concurrent enrollment program courses implemented after the 2017-18 academic term have six years from the beginning of the first term of classes to comply.

Workgroup on Dual Credit Programs.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (State Board) and the public IHEs must convene a work group regarding concurrent enrollment and college preparation programs (dual credit). The work group has three purposes:

- identify opportunities and challenges related to awareness, access, and completion of dual credit programs;
- identify best practices to promote awareness, access, and completion of dual credit programs; and
- make recommendations for improving collaboration and communication in regards to awareness, access, and completion of dual credit programs between the IHEs and K-12 schools.

The workgroup is to include one representative appointed by each of the following:

- the Executive Director of the Council of Presidents (COP);
- the Director of the State Board;
- the Executive Director of the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC);
- the director of an association representing Washington private nonprofit colleges;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction, a representative responsible for agency policy;
- the Superintendent of Public Instruction, a representative responsible for concurrent enrollment and accelerated learning opportunity programs;
- the president of an organization focusing on college and high school relations, representing Washington colleges and high schools;
- the executive director of an association representing Washington high school principals, from the east side of the Cascade Mountains;
- the executive director of an association representing Washington high school principals, from the west side of the Cascade Mountains;
- the executive director of an association of Washington school district administrators;
- the executive director of an association representing Washington high school counselors;
- the executive director of an organization representing Washington parent teacher associations;
- the Executive Director of the State Board of Education;
- the executive director of an association of Washington school directors;
- an association representing community and technical college faculty; and
- an association representing public four-year institutions of higher education faculty.

In addition, the workgroup must include three representatives from each of the following categories: higher education faculty, admissions directors or registrars, and representatives who work on intersector issues relating to transfer. The three representatives in each of the categories must represent the public four-year IHEs to be appointed by the COP, the nonprofit four-year IHEs to be appointed by the Executive Director of an association representing private, nonprofit colleges, and the community and technical colleges to be appointed by the State Board. Lastly, there must be three representatives from high schools with experience teaching college preparatory programs with examination, with one representing AP, one representing IB, and one representing Cambridge International, all to be appointed by an organization representing K-12 teachers.

The workgroup may invite representatives from other agencies as well. The workgroup must report to the Legislature and the IHEs on its goals by October 31, 2019.

Education Research and Data Center Workgroup.

The Education Research and Data Center (ERDC) must convene a workgroup to provide consistent, easily understood dual credit data among the IHEs and K-12 schools. The ERDC workgroup must determine what data is collected at the state level, identify gaps in the state-level data, identify what data should be collected, and make recommendations for improving data collection and communication with stakeholders. The ERDC workgroup must report its findings to the Legislature by December 31, 2019. Members of the ERDC workgroup include representatives from:

- public four-year IHEs, to be appointed by the Executive Director of the COP;
- community and technical colleges, to be appointed by the Director of the State Board;
- the COP, to be appointed by the Executive Director of the Council of Presidents;
- the State Board, to be appointed by the Director;
- the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, to be appointed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- the State Board of Education;
- private, nonprofit colleges, to be appointed by the Executive Director of an association representing private, nonprofit colleges; and
- the WSAC, to be appointed by the Executive Director of the WSAC.

Various terms referencing dual credit are updated throughout the statutes to reflect the new definitions of concurrent enrollment programs and college preparatory programs with examinations. Tech Prep references are also updated to CTE. The reporting date on dual credit program participation is changed from September 1 annually to December 31.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill amends current AP credit policy to remove the requirement that the IHEs grant undergraduate college credit for a minimum score of three, and also strikes the biennial review of the AP credit policy and reporting requirement. Also removed are the requirements for the IHEs to grant college credit for students who earn minimum scores of five on higher level IB examinations and who complete Cambridge International examinations. The biennial review and reporting requirements for IB and Cambridge International credit policies are also removed. Instead, the IHEs must establish coordinated, evidence-based policies for granting as many undergraduate college credits as possible and appropriate for general education requirements or the equivalent to students who successfully complete AP, IB, and Cambridge. The credit policies must all be posted to campus web sites by fall 2018.

Additional representatives were added to the workgroups. For the workgroup addressing dual credit, representatives added include one principal, one community and technical college faculty, one four-year IHE faculty, and three high school teachers, one each with experience with AP, IB, and Cambridge International. A representative of the State Board of Education was added to the ERDC workgroup.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available. A new fiscal note was requested on February 1, 2018.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The focus of this legislation is students. Students are provided with multiple paths into higher education, and this makes information about college credits really transparent, consistent, and available. It is a comprehensive approach for dual credit options. It creates a framework for dialogue and data tracking. It also represents a collaborative experience with public institutions, private nonprofit institutions, and K-12 partners. The bill increases opportunities for underrepresented students, and also updates terminology.

This is not just about IB. The policies are crafted from an institutional perspective to maximize credit for all dual credit students. It also creates oversight by requiring national accreditation for College in the High School programs to ensure consistency. The state needs to ensure students are adequately prepared for their college courses. One size fits all is problematic for student success. If a student has to repeat a course because they were not adequately prepared, that can have implications for their financial aid.

The workgroup should include the State Board of Education and look at diversity across the state. Representatives from both rural and the east side should be included.

(Opposed) This bill is unjust to students, especially when students push themselves academically with college-level courses, but then do not receive college credit. This policy is not research-based, and it does not save the state any money. The IB policy should be changed to require a minimum score of four on either standard level or higher level courses. Most students do not take higher level IB courses unless they are an IB diploma programme candidate. Otherwise, this negatively impacts students.

(Other) The bill has inconsistent policies and is unjust. The workgroup needs more higher education faculty, and a recommendation is to add a faculty representative for each of the two- and four-year sectors.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Orwall, prime sponsor; Cody Eccles, Council of Presidents; Joyce Hammer, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges; Violet Boyer, Independent Colleges of Washington; Keith Klaus, Eastern Washington University; Janice DeCosmo, University of Washington; Matthew Campbell, Pierce College Student Success; and Marie Sullivan, Washington State Parent Teacher Association.

(Opposed) Fatin Almaroof, Elizabeth Ankcorn, and Maya Frame, Kent Meridian High School.

(Other) David Quinn, Edmonds Woodway High School; and Wendy Rader, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.