

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1051

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to high school completion programs.

Brief Description: Expanding high school completion programs.

Sponsors: By Representatives Upthegrove, Kagi, P. Sullivan, Haigh, Simpson, Moeller, Green, Santos, Kenney, Williams, Hunter and Miloscia.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/16/07 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 1/22/07, 73-21.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/10/07, 32-16.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows students under 21 who have completed all state and local graduation requirements except the Certificate of Academic Achievement to enroll at no charge at a community or technical college in a program to earn a high school diploma.
- Allows colleges to contract with high schools to offer the program or deliver the program directly.
- Authorizes colleges that deliver the program directly to receive funding amounts equivalent to allocations under the Basic Education Act, Learning Assistance Program, Bilingual Program, and Student Achievement Program for each full-time equivalent student, as applicable to each student.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

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.

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, McDermott, Roach, Santos and P. Sullivan.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

High School Graduation Requirements. The State Board of Education (SBE) establishes minimum high school graduation requirements for public schools. Students must complete at least 19 credits in specified content areas, do a culminating project, and prepare a high school and beyond plan. Beginning with the class of 2008, students will also need to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) by meeting the state academic standards in reading, writing, and mathematics on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). Local school districts may establish additional requirements. Students can enroll in public schools until they complete a diploma or turn 21.

High School Programs in Community and Technical Colleges. Washington's community and technical colleges have a broad mission that includes workforce training, academic degrees, and adult education. The colleges also offer three types of high school programs:

(1) **High School Completion.** High School Completion enables adults to earn a regular high school diploma issued by the college. The SBE graduation requirements apply, except that students over the age of 21 are exempt from the CAA under SBE rules.

The programs serve approximately 3,700 students per year, most of whom are over 21. Students under age 18 need a release from their high school to enroll. Students over the age of 19 are eligible for a tuition waiver; those under 19 pay tuition. The programs are funded with state funds through the community and technical college budget.

(2) **Drop-Out Retrieval.** Eight colleges offer high school programs under contract with a local school district for students aged 16 to 21 to make up the credits they need to graduate. Students who complete the school district's graduation requirements earn their diploma from the district. About 1,700 students participate in these programs. The school district pays the college for the program under the terms of the contract using funds from the Basic Education Act (BEA) and other resources.

(3) **Technical High Schools.** Bates, Lake Washington, and Clover Park Technical Colleges each operate a program for juniors and seniors that offers career-technical training and courses necessary to receive a diploma from the college. Approximately 1,075 students are enrolled. The colleges bill the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for BEA funding and are prohibited from charging tuition.

Running Start. The Running Start program provides a way to use BEA funds to support students who are dually enrolled in high school and college and are earning both high school

and college credits for their courses. The BEA allocation for Running Start is \$4,397 per Full Time Enrolled (FTE) student.

Although the BEA represents the largest allocation of state funds for K-12 education, there are other funding programs. For example, school districts receive \$770 for each student in the Transitional Bilingual Program. Funding for the Learning Assistance Program (LAP) is \$188 per student. Funding for the Student Achievement Program is \$375 per FTE student for 2006-07, scheduled to increase to \$450 in 2007-08.

Summary of Bill:

Students under age 21 who have completed all state and local graduation requirements except the CAA or the Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) can enroll in a high school completion program at a community or technical college and earn a high school diploma.

Colleges must make the program available to any eligible student, but can implement it in the following ways:

- contract with a local school district, in which case the school district issues the diploma;
- deliver the program and courses directly and the college issues the diploma; or
- offer some combination of contracted program and direct delivery.

If the college delivers the program directly, it is reimbursed by the OSPI for each FTE student enrolled in high school completion courses. Funding is calculated based on the following programs:

- the BEA funding allocation, where reimbursement is calculated using a statewide average per FTE student, similar to the Running Start program;
- an amount per FTE student based on the state allocation for the LAP program;
- an amount per FTE student based on the state allocation for the Student Achievement Program; and
- for bilingual students, an amount per FTE student based on the state allocation for the Transitional Bilingual Program.

Colleges cannot charge students in the program tuition or fees for courses that lead to a diploma.

Colleges must offer the programs on the college campus, but can also offer them at additional locations other than a high school. Colleges, school districts, and Educational Service Districts (ESDs) are not precluded from offering high school completion programs for students who do not meet the criteria in the bill. Colleges and school districts are encouraged to consult with ESDs in developing and offering the new programs.

Student learning plans for high school students include this high school completion option, if applicable. School districts must provide information to 10th, 11th, and 12th grade students and their parents about this option. Any student who completes all state and local graduation requirements except the CAA can participate in high school graduation ceremonies.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

The high school diploma completion program for students who have met all high school graduation requirements except the Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) is made into a pilot program at two community and technical colleges, rather than being implemented statewide. The pilot colleges can enter into regional partnerships to offer the program and are not required to administer the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The colleges are selected by June 30, 2007, by the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) based on certain criteria.

To be eligible for the program, students must also receive a Level 2 on the reading and writing portions of the WASL; have attempted a retake of the WASL or an alternative assessment; have participated in remediation; and receive a recommendation from their principal.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy conducts a review of the pilot program beginning in July of 2010, with a report by January 1, 2011, that includes the number of students participating and receiving a diploma, types of programs offered, and the cost of the program.

A provision allowing students who have met all graduation requirements except the CAA to participate in graduation ceremonies is removed.

The SPI and the SBCTC develop an estimate of the number of students likely to participate in the program if it is established on a statewide basis and identify possible additional service delivery models for community and technical colleges. A report on these issues, along with an implementation plan for the pilot program, is submitted to the Legislature by December 15, 2007.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 10, 2007.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: (In support) Currently, students who need extra time beyond four years of high school can stay in school and we continue to pay for their education up to age 21, or they find their way to a community college and try to complete high school but have to pay for that. This proposal allows students who have completed everything except the WASL to continue working toward a diploma in an age-appropriate setting. For some students being a fifth year senior meets their needs; for others it offers only a social stigma that may lead them to give up. Being on a college campus offers not only an opportunity to finish a diploma, but the possibility that these students will enroll in college or workforce training courses to further their education.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Upthegrove, prime sponsor.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.