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**SENATE BILL 5080**

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**State of Washington 64th Legislature 2015 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Dammeier, Rolfes, Fain, Frockt, Litzow, and McAuliffe

AN ACT Relating to dual credit options; amending RCW 28A.320.196, 28A.600.290, and 28B.15.821; creating new sections; and providing an expiration date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  The legislature finds that Washington has been a front-runner in dual credit innovation through the establishment of the running start and college in the high school programs, and has continued to expand student choices in dual credit programs.

In Washington, a range of dual credit or dual enrollment programs are available to students. Dual credit programs, such as running start, college in the high school, tech prep (course completion options), and AP and international baccalaureate and Cambridge (standardized exam options) offer academically prepared students the opportunity to earn college credits while still in high school. Students who participate in these programs achieve improved high school graduation rates and are more likely to continue on to college and complete a degree. In addition, dual credit and dual enrollment programs support students' individual college and career pathways.

The legislature further finds that through the development and implementation of the 2013 roadmap the student achievement council has identified key barriers that limit access to dual credit programs, particularly for low-income students. Removing these barriers is a critical step toward achieving the state educational attainment goals outlined in the roadmap.

The legislature recognizes that the decision to enroll in a dual credit program should be made by the student and the student's parents or guardians, in consultation with counselors or academic advisors, and based on the academic, cultural, and developmental needs and college and career goals of the student. The decision to choose one dual credit option over another should not be based on the difference in the costs of one option over another.

In the college in the high school program, credit is awarded based on successful course completion and ability to pay tuition and fees. Under the current college in the high school system, some students may successfully complete the course but do not receive credit because they are unable to pay.

Students in the running start program face a different but equally challenging situation. Students in the running start program do not receive funding for books and transportation costs. These financial barriers decrease opportunities for lower income students to benefit from dual credit programs.

Therefore, the legislature intends to increase opportunities for academically prepared high school students to earn up to two years of college credit through dual credit programs, and to reduce disparities in access to, and completion of, these programs. This act provides a new funding model to eliminate tuition in the college in the high school program, and provides flexibility in the academic acceleration incentive program to assist students with transportation and book expenses associated with the running start program. It is the intent of the legislature, once this new funding model is enacted and operational, to establish a distinction between the college in the high school program as a program occurring in high schools and the running start program as a program occurring on a college campus.

The legislature finds that dual credit opportunities are a valuable means of supporting students on their way to successful completion of college and career pathways. The legislature seeks additional recommendations to mitigate financial and other barriers for students enrolled in the running start program, and dual credit programs based on standardized exams.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.320.196 and 2013 c 184 s 3 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Subject to funds appropriated specifically for this purpose, the academic acceleration incentive program is established as provided in this section. The intent of the legislature is that the funds awarded under the program be used to support teacher training, curriculum, technology, examination fees, textbook fees, and other costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students, including transportation for running start students to and from the institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate half of the funds appropriated for the purposes of this section on a competitive basis to provide one-time grants for high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses. To be eligible for a grant, a school district must have adopted an academic acceleration policy as provided under RCW 28A.320.195. In making grant awards, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must give priority to grants for high schools with a high proportion of low-income students and high schools seeking to develop new capacity for dual credit courses rather than proposing marginal expansion of current capacity.

(3) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate half of the funds appropriated for the purposes of this section to school districts as an incentive award for each student who earned dual high school and college credit, as described under subsection (4) of this section, for courses offered by the district's high schools during the previous school year. School districts must distribute the award to the high schools that generated the funds. The award amount for low-income students eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced-price meals program who earn dual credits must be set at one hundred twenty-five percent of the base award for other students. A student who earns more than one dual credit in the same school year counts only once for the purposes of the incentive award.

(4) For the purposes of this section, the following students are considered to have earned dual high school and college credit in a course offered by a high school:

(a) Students who achieve a score of three or higher on an AP examination;

(b) Students who achieve a score of four or higher on an examination of the international baccalaureate diploma programme;

(c) Students who successfully complete a Cambridge advanced international certificate of education examination;

(d) Students who successfully complete a course through the college in the high school program under RCW 28A.600.290 and are awarded credit by the partnering institution of higher education; and

(e) Students who satisfy the dual enrollment and class performance requirements to earn college credit through a tech prep course.

(5) If a high school provides access to online courses for students to earn dual high school and college credit at no cost to the student, such a course is considered to be offered by the high school. ((~~Students enrolled in the running start program under RCW 28A.600.300 do not generate an incentive award under this section.~~))

(6) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall report to the education policy committees and the fiscal committees of the legislature, by January 1st of each year, information about the demographics of the students earning dual credits in the schools receiving grants under this section for the prior school year. Demographic data shall be disaggregated pursuant to RCW 28A.300.042.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.600.290 and 2012 c 229 s 801 are each amended to read as follows:

((~~(1) The superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the public baccalaureate institutions shall jointly develop and each adopt rules governing the college in the high school program. The association of Washington school principals shall be consulted during the rules development. The rules shall be written to encourage the maximum use of the program and may not narrow or limit the enrollment options.~~

~~(2)~~))Commencing with the 2015-16 school year, in addition to a school district's other general fund allocations, districts shall be allocated an amount per college credit for students enrolled in college in the high school courses under this section as specified in the omnibus appropriations act and adjusted for inflation from the 2015-16 school year. The minimum allocation under this section is seventy dollars per quarter credit for credit-bearing postsecondary coursework. The office of the superintendent of public instruction, the student achievement council, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the public baccalaureate institutions shall review funding levels for the program every four years beginning in 2017 and recommend changes.

(2)(a) For the purposes of funding students enrolled in the college in the high school program in accordance with subsection (1) of this section, college in the high school is defined as a dual credit program located on a high school campus or in a high school environment in which a high school student is able to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing postsecondary level courses with a passing grade.

(b) Running start is defined as a dual credit program that occurs in a college or university environment, which may include programs located on the campus or teaching center of an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, or offered online by an institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016, in which a high school student is able to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing postsecondary level courses with a passing grade.

(3) College in the high school programs may include both academic and career and technical education.

(4) College in the high school programs shall each be governed by a local contract between the district and the participating institution of higher education, in compliance with the ((~~guidelines adopted by the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, and the public baccalaureate institutions~~))rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction under this section.

((~~(3)~~))(5) The college in the high school program must include the provisions in this subsection.

(a) The high school and participating institution of higher education together shall define the criteria for student eligibility. ((~~The institution of higher education may charge tuition fees to participating students.~~))

(b) ((~~School districts shall report no student for more than one full-time equivalent including college in the high school courses~~))In lieu of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and services and activities fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.041, the student's school district shall transmit to the participating institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016 and 28B.07.020 an amount per credit for each full-time equivalent student. The superintendent of public instruction shall consult with participating institutions of higher education and the state board for community and technical colleges on the calculation and distribution of the funds.

(c) The funds received by the participating institution of higher education may not be deemed tuition or operating fees and may be retained by the institution of higher education.

(d) Enrollment information on persons registered under this section must be maintained by the institution of higher education separately from other enrollment information and may not be included in official enrollment reports, nor may such persons be considered in any enrollment statistics that would affect higher education budgetary determinations.

(e) A school district must grant high school credit to a student enrolled in a program course if the student successfully completes the course. If no comparable course is offered by the school district, the school district superintendent shall determine how many credits to award for the course. The determination shall be made in writing before the student enrolls in the course. The credits shall be applied toward graduation requirements and subject area requirements. Evidence of successful completion of each program course shall be included in the student's secondary school records and transcript.

(f) ((~~An~~))A participating institution of higher education must grant college credit to a student enrolled in a program course if the student successfully completes the course. The college credit shall be applied toward general education requirements or major requirements. ((~~If no comparable course is offered by the college, the institution of higher education at which the teacher of the program course is employed shall determine how many credits to award for the course and whether the course fulfills general education or major requirements.~~)) Evidence of successful completion of each program course must be included in the student's college transcript.

(g) ((~~Eleventh and twelfth grade~~))Students in grades nine through twelve or students who have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in ((~~the eleventh or twelfth~~)) grades nine through twelve may participate in the college in the high school program.

(h) Participating school districts must provide general information about the college in the high school program to all students in grades ((~~ten, eleven, and~~))eight through twelve and to the parents and guardians of those students.

((~~(i) Full-time and part-time faculty at institutions of higher education, including adjunct faculty, are eligible to teach program courses.~~

~~(4)~~))(6) The superintendent of public instruction shall adopt rules for the administration of this section. The rules shall be jointly developed by the superintendent of public instruction, the state board for community and technical colleges, the student achievement council, and the public baccalaureate institutions. The association of Washington school principals and the private nonprofit colleges in Washington must be consulted during the rules development. The rules must outline quality and eligibility standards that are informed by nationally recognized standards or models. In addition, the rules must encourage the maximum use of the program and may not narrow or limit the enrollment options.

(7) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section.

(a) "Institution of higher education" has the ((~~meaning~~))definitions in RCW 28B.07.020 and 28B.10.016, and also includes a public tribal college located in Washington and accredited by the Northwest commission on colleges and universities or another accrediting association recognized by the United States department of education.

(b) "Program course" means a college course offered in a high school under the college in the high school program.

**Sec.**  RCW 28B.15.821 and 2009 c 215 s 8 are each amended to read as follows:

As used in this chapter, "dual credit program" means a program, administered by either an institution of higher education or a high school, through which high school students ((~~in the eleventh or twelfth grade~~)) who have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high school diploma apply to a participating institution of higher education to enroll in courses or programs offered by the institution of higher education and simultaneously earn high school and college credit.

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  (1) By September 15, 2016, the student achievement council, in collaboration with the state board for community and technical colleges, the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the public baccalaureate institutions, and the private nonprofit colleges, shall make recommendations to the legislature to streamline and improve dual credit programs in Washington with particular attention to increasing participation of students who are low income and/or currently underrepresented in the running start, AP, international baccalaureate, and Cambridge international programs.

(2) This section expires January 1, 2017.

**--- END ---**