
Education Committee

HB 1164

Brief Description: Concerning dual credit programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Bergquist, Jinkins and Ortiz-Self; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Authorizes qualifying high schools to receive competitive grants from the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program (Program) more than once.
- Discontinues a reporting requirement obligating the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to annually inform legislative committees about students earning dual credits from schools receiving grants through the Program.
- Makes numerous changes to the funding provisions for College in the High School programs, including making per college credit funding available to students in grade 10, rather than only grades 11 and 12, and conditioning student funding upon eligibility for free or reduce price lunches.

Hearing Date: 1/28/19

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Academic Acceleration Policy and Incentive Program.

School districts are encouraged to adopt an academic acceleration policy for high school students. Under an academic acceleration policy, the district automatically enrolls any student who meets the state standard on the high school statewide student assessment into the next most rigorous level of advanced courses offered by the high school. Students who successfully complete the advanced course are then enrolled in the next most rigorous level of advanced course, with the objective that students will eventually be automatically enrolled in dual credit courses that offer students the opportunity to earn postsecondary course credit while also earning credit toward high school graduation.

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.

In 2013 the Legislature established the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program (Program) with the intent of having funds awarded through the Program used for supporting teacher training, curriculum, technology, examination fees, textbook fees, and other costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students.

Under the Program, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is required to allocate one-half of the legislatively appropriated funds as competitive one-time grants for eligible high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses. The other half of the funds must be awarded to school districts as an incentive award for each student who, in accordance with specified requirements, earned dual high school and college credit for courses offered by the district's high schools in the previous school year.

The OSPI is required to annually report to the education and fiscal committees of the Legislature information about the demographics of the students earning dual credits from schools receiving the Program grants.

College in the High School Programs.

College in the High School (CHS) programs provide college level courses in high schools or high school environments to qualified students who are in or are eligible for enrollment in grades 10, 11, and 12. Students who participate in a CHS program are able to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing postsecondary level courses with a passing grade.

In the 2016-17 school year, 21,830 students participated in CHS programs.

The CHS programs are established in contract a between a high school and a college or university. Among other provisions, the contracts must:

- define the criteria for a student's eligibility for the program;
- specify whether the student or the high school pays for tuition fees;
- provide that students who successfully complete a CHS program course will receive both high school credit and college credit; and
- provide general information about the CHS program to students in grades 9 through 12.

The maximum annual number of allocated credits that a student can receive through a CHS program is limited by statute to 10, but the omnibus appropriations act, the enacted legislation that establishes the state's two-year budget, may establish a lower limit.

State funding for CHS programs, which is subject to legislative discretion, does not include funding for students who are in or eligible for enrollment in grade 10. For students in or eligible for enrollment in grades 11 or 12, the state funding is prioritized as follows:

1. the first priority is students whose residence, or the high school in which they are enrolled, is located 20 driving miles or more as measured by the most direct route from the nearest eligible institution of higher education offering a running start program, whichever is greater; and
2. the second priority is high schools that are eligible for the small school funding enhancement in the omnibus appropriations act.

In school year 2015-16, high schools offering a running start program in the previous year were the first funding priority.

If the priorities specified above are funded, and if the Legislature provides monies for this specific purpose, a subsidy may be provided per college credit for students in or eligible for enrollment in grades 11 or 12 who are enrolled in CHS courses and also meet financial need requirements. The maximum annual number of subsidized credits that a student may receive through these provisions is limited by statute to five, but the omnibus appropriations act may establish a lower limit.

Summary of Bill:

Academic Acceleration Incentive Program Grants.

Grant requirements for the Program are modified. A provision making high schools eligible to receive a one-time competitive grant to expand the availability of dual credit courses is changed to allow high schools to receive the grant multiple times.

A reporting requirement obligating the OSPI to annually inform legislative committees about the demographics of students earning dual credits through schools receiving a Program grant is repealed.

College in the High School Programs.

Numerous changes are made to funding provisions for CHS programs. Funding may be allocated at an amount per college credit for all students enrolled in a CHS program, not just for those who are in or are eligible to be enrolled in grades 11 or 12, who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches. The maximum annual number of allocated college credits per participating student in the general funding provisions for CHS programs is increased from 10 to 15.

Additionally, current and expired provisions establishing funding prioritizations are removed and provisions establishing per college credit subsidies for students in or eligible for enrollment in grades 11 or 12 who are enrolled in CHS courses and meet financial need requirements are repealed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2019.

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