

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5113

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As of January 29, 2019

**Title:** An act relating to granting of high school diplomas by community or technical colleges.

**Brief Description:** Concerning community and technical colleges granting high school diplomas.

**Sponsors:** Senators Liias, Zeiger and Kuderer; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/24/19.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Expands the category of students who may receive a diploma from a community or technical college to include any individual over age sixteen who completes an associates degree.
- Provides that any individual aged sixteen through twenty-one may be eligible for the basic education allocation who earns a high school diploma through a community or technical college by completing an associates degree.

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**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Staff:** Alicia Kinne-Clawson (786-7407)

**Background:** High School Diplomas. School districts must issue diplomas to students signifying graduation from high school upon the students' satisfactory completion of all local and state graduation requirements.

High School Degrees at Community or Technical College. A community or technical college (CTC) may issue a high school diploma or certificate to an individual:

- who meets the requirements for high school completion, subject to rules adopted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education;

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- who completes an associate degree program through Running Start; or
- who is twenty-one years or older and enrolls in a CTC and obtains an associates degree.

**Summary of Bill:** Any individual aged sixteen through twenty-one who enrolls in a community or technical college and satisfactorily completes an associates degree must be awarded a diploma from the college upon written request and is eligible for the basic education allocation.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: This bill brings equity to students excluded from current policy who earn an associates degree and have not yet attained a high school diploma. Right now youth reengagement students in particular are excluded from this pathway. This bill corrects that inequity and opens up many career pathways for postsecondary education and degrees. The high school diploma along with a community college credential allows students to access financial aid and move forward in their careers. This bill opens doors for students who have had negative experiences with education and provides a fresh start. Without this pathway students may have to navigate multiple additional classes to earn a GED after already completing their associates. These students will be prepared to transfer to universities and accept careers in a variety of fields. As a student athlete and a peer mentor I am doing everything in my power to transfer to a university. But not having a GED has been a barrier because I am too young to access the diploma pathway. Under current law I would have two or three additional quarters of work to complete to prepare for my dream of a university education.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Marko Liias, Prime Sponsor; Katherine Mahoney, OSPI; Troy Goracke, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Carrie O'Brien, Green River College, Open Doors; Deandre Washington, Green River College, Open Doors; Kian Ford, Green River College, Open Doors.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.