
SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5265

State of Washington

67th Legislature

2021 Regular Session

By Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Hunt, Das, Nguyen, Wellman, and Wilson, C.)

READ FIRST TIME 02/15/21.

1 AN ACT Relating to the creation of a bridge year pilot program;
2 amending RCW 28A.600.290 and 28A.600.330; reenacting and amending RCW
3 28A.600.310; adding new sections to chapter 28A.630 RCW; providing an
4 expiration date; and declaring an emergency.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
7 RCW to read as follows:

8 (1) The bridge year pilot program is established. The office of
9 the superintendent of public instruction shall administer the program
10 as described in this section. The purpose of the pilot program is to
11 provide students in the graduating class of 2021 and 2022 an
12 additional year to address the learning loss and missed opportunities
13 in extracurricular activities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

14 (2)(a) Each high school participating in the pilot program shall
15 designate a school staff member as a bridge year liaison to serve as
16 the school's central point of contact for students interested in
17 pursuing a bridge year and for students participating in a bridge
18 year. Nothing in this section requires a school district to hire an
19 individual to serve as a bridge year liaison.

20 (b)(i) A bridge year liaison shall develop an individual learning
21 plan for each student pursuing a bridge year, in consultation with

1 the student. The individual learning plan must define academic and
2 cocurricular goals for the bridge year and detail activities and
3 strategies for accomplishing those goals including, but not limited
4 to, counseling, academic support, coursework, and cocurricular or
5 athletic participation.

6 (ii) The credits taken by a student in this program must form a
7 coordinated sequence of academic content that prepares the student
8 for high-skilled, high-wage, or in-demand occupations.

9 (iii) At the conclusion of each term of the bridge year, the host
10 high school shall update the student's high school transcript to
11 reflect any high school credits earned during the bridge year.

12 (3)(a) A student who has met all applicable high school
13 graduation requirements in the graduating class of 2021 or the
14 graduating class of 2022 may defer graduation from high school to
15 pursue a bridge year.

16 (b)(i) Except as provided in (b)(ii) of this subsection (3), to
17 be eligible to participate in the bridge year pilot program a student
18 must be 19 years of age or younger and must not turn 20 years of age
19 at any time during the bridge year.

20 (ii) A student is eligible to participate in the bridge year
21 pilot program if the student will turn 20 years of age during the
22 bridge year due to services provided pursuant to the student's
23 individualized education program plan.

24 (c)(i) During the first term of the student's bridge year, the
25 student must take between two and four high school credits, or the
26 postsecondary equivalent, at the student's host high school, an
27 institution of higher education, or a combination thereof.

28 (ii) During the second term of the student's bridge year, the
29 student must take between nine and 12 quarter credits, or the
30 equivalent, at an institution of higher education or through college
31 in the high school courses.

32 (d) A student participating in this program must maintain a grade
33 point average of at least 2.0 in order to remain in the bridge year
34 pilot program.

35 (4) The host high school shall permit students participating in
36 the bridge year pilot program to participate in graduation ceremonies
37 with the graduating class of 2021 or class of 2022, as applicable,
38 but may not issue diplomas to those students until the conclusion of
39 the bridge year. Students that have met all graduation requirements

1 have graduated with their initial graduation cohort for the purpose
2 of calculating the four-year graduation rate for that cohort.

3 (5) School districts participating in the bridge year pilot
4 program shall expunge from a student's transcript any "D" or "F"
5 grade, or its equivalent, for a course if the student takes the same
6 course during the student's bridge year and completes the course with
7 a higher grade than the grade in the student's transcript.

8 (6) The institution of higher education at which a student
9 attends under this program shall report at least quarterly to the
10 bridge year liaison at the student's host high school concerning the
11 student's academic progress and performance, in a manner specified by
12 the student's individual learning plan developed under subsection (2)
13 of this section.

14 (7) (a) In the event that a student initially decides to pursue a
15 bridge year in the fall term but does not continue in the following
16 term, the student's host high school shall release all final
17 transcripts and other records as necessary and as may be requested.

18 (b) A student who decides not to continue the bridge year is not
19 eligible to participate in a sports program or other extracurricular
20 activities under this section or section 2 of this act.

21 (8) For the purposes of this section:

22 (a) "Host high school" means the high school that a student
23 pursuing a bridge year attended at the beginning of the student's
24 senior year.

25 (b) "Institutions of higher education" has the same meaning as in
26 RCW 28A.600.300.

27 (9) Nothing in this section requires a student to pursue a bridge
28 year.

29 (10) A private school may elect to participate in the bridge year
30 pilot program created under this section.

31 (11) For purposes of funding allocations and student enrollment,
32 students participating in the bridge year pilot program are running
33 start students participating in the running start program under RCW
34 28A.600.300.

35 (12) Students participating in the bridge year pilot program are
36 eligible for college in the high school courses under RCW
37 28A.600.290.

38 (13) Students participating in the bridge year pilot program are
39 eligible recipients for funds distributed under chapter 28A.150 RCW.

1 (14) The office of the superintendent of public instruction may
2 adopt rules necessary for the effective and efficient implementation
3 of this act.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) A student who pursues a bridge year pursuant to this act may
7 participate in activities sanctioned by the Washington
8 interscholastic activities association and extracurricular activities
9 at the student's host high school.

10 (2) A student participating in a sport or extracurricular
11 activity during the student's bridge year shall pay applicable
12 student athletic and activities fees and be subject to the host high
13 school's student code of conduct, athletic code of conduct, and any
14 other applicable codes, rules, or policies required for student
15 participation in these activities.

16 (3) Except as provided in subsection (4) of this section, nothing
17 in this act supersedes the governance or eligibility rules
18 established by a local, state, or national organization with bona
19 fide authority over a particular extracurricular activity.

20 (4) For students participating in an interscholastic activity
21 under this section, the Washington interscholastic athletic
22 association shall be requested to waive the applicable consecutive
23 year eligibility rule.

24 (5) Notwithstanding the provisions of any law, rule, or
25 regulation to the contrary, an insurer doing business in the state
26 and issuing liability insurance policies to school districts must
27 provide coverage for students participating in a sport or
28 extracurricular activity under this section as part of a school or
29 school district's liability insurance policy.

30 (6) For purposes of this section, "host high school" has the same
31 meaning as in section 1 of this act.

32 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.600.290 and 2015 c 202 s 3 are each amended to
33 read as follows:

34 (1)(a) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for
35 this specific purpose and commencing with the 2015-16 school year,
36 funding may be allocated at an amount per college credit for eleventh
37 and twelfth grade students (~~(\oplus)~~) L students who have not yet received
38 a high school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in the

1 eleventh or twelfth grade, and students participating in a bridge
2 year under section 1 of this act, who are enrolled in college in the
3 high school courses under this section as specified in the omnibus
4 appropriations act and adjusted for inflation from the 2015-16 school
5 year. The maximum annual number of allocated credits per
6 participating student shall be specified in the omnibus
7 appropriations act, which must not exceed ten credits. Funding shall
8 be prioritized in the following order:

9 (i) High schools offering a running start in the high school
10 program in school year 2014-15. These schools shall only receive
11 prioritized funding in school year 2015-16;

12 (ii) Students whose residence or the high school in which they
13 are enrolled is located twenty driving miles or more as measured by
14 the most direct route from the nearest eligible institution of higher
15 education offering a running start program, whichever is greater; and

16 (iii) High schools eligible for the small school funding
17 enhancement in the omnibus appropriations act.

18 (b)(i) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for
19 this specific purpose and commencing with the 2015-16 school year,
20 and only after the programs in (a) of this subsection are funded, a
21 subsidy may be provided per college credit for eleventh and twelfth
22 grade students ~~((or)),~~ students who have not yet received a high
23 school diploma or its equivalent and are eligible to be in the
24 eleventh or twelfth grade, and students participating in a bridge
25 year under section 1 of this act, who have been deemed eligible for
26 free or reduced-price lunch and are enrolled in college in the high
27 school courses under this section as specified in the omnibus
28 appropriations act and adjusted for inflation from the 2015-16 school
29 year. The maximum annual number of subsidized credits per
30 participating student shall be specified in the omnibus
31 appropriations act, which must not exceed five credits.

32 (ii) Districts wishing to participate in the subsidy program must
33 apply to the office of the superintendent of public instruction by
34 July 1st of each year and report the preliminary estimate of eligible
35 students to receive the subsidy and the total number of projected
36 credit hours.

37 (iii) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
38 shall notify districts by September 1st of each school year if the
39 district's students will receive the subsidy. If more districts apply
40 than funding is available, the office of the superintendent of public

1 instruction shall prioritize the district applications. The
2 superintendent shall develop factors to determine priority including,
3 but not limited to, the number of dual credit opportunities available
4 for low-income students in the districts.

5 (c) Districts shall remit any allocations or subsidies on behalf
6 of participating students under (a) and (b) of this subsection to the
7 participating institution of higher education and those students
8 shall not be required to pay for the credits.

9 (d) The minimum allocation and subsidy under this section is
10 sixty-five dollars per quarter credit for credit-bearing
11 postsecondary coursework. The office of the superintendent of public
12 instruction, the student achievement council, the state board for
13 community and technical colleges, and the public baccalaureate
14 institutions shall review funding levels for the program every four
15 years beginning in 2017 and recommend changes.

16 (e) Students may pay college in the high school fees with
17 advanced college tuition payment program tuition units at a rate set
18 by the advanced college tuition payment program governing body under
19 chapter 28B.95 RCW.

20 (2) For the purposes of funding students enrolled in the college
21 in the high school program in accordance with subsection (1) of this
22 section, college in the high school is defined as a dual credit
23 program located on a high school campus or in a high school
24 environment in which a high school student, or a student
25 participating in a bridge year under section 1 of this act, is able
26 to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing
27 postsecondary level courses with a passing grade.

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

30 (4) College in the high school programs shall each be governed by
31 a local contract between the district and the participating
32 institution of higher education, in compliance with the rules adopted
33 by the superintendent of public instruction under this section.

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

36 (a) The high school and participating institution of higher
37 education together shall define the criteria for student eligibility.
38 The institution of higher education may charge tuition fees to
39 participating students. If specific funding is provided in the
40 omnibus appropriations act for the per credit allocations and per

1 credit subsidies under subsection (1) of this section, the maximum
2 per credit fee charged to any enrolled student may not exceed the
3 amount of the per credit allocation or subsidy.

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

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

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

23 (e) A participating institution of higher education must grant
24 college credit to a student enrolled in a program course if the
25 student successfully completes the course. The college credit shall
26 be applied toward general education requirements or degree
27 requirements at institutions of higher education. Evidence of
28 successful completion of each program course must be included in the
29 student's college transcript.

30 (f) Tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students or students who
31 have not yet received a high school diploma or its equivalent and are
32 eligible to be in the tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grades, and
33 students participating in a bridge year under section 1 of this act,
34 may participate in the college in the high school program.

35 (g) Participating school districts must provide general
36 information about the college in the high school program to all
37 students in grades nine through twelve and to the parents and
38 guardians of those students.

1 (h) Full-time and part-time faculty at institutions of higher
2 education, including adjunct faculty, are eligible to teach program
3 courses.

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

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

16 (a) "Institution of higher education" has the definition in RCW
17 28B.10.016, and also includes a public tribal college located in
18 Washington and accredited by the Northwest commission on colleges and
19 universities or another accrediting association recognized by the
20 United States department of education.

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

23 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.600.310 and 2019 c 252 s 115 and 2019 c 176 s 2
24 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

25 (1)(a) Eleventh and twelfth grade students (~~(e)~~), students who
26 have not yet received the credits required for the award of a high
27 school diploma and are eligible to be in the eleventh or twelfth
28 grades, and students participating in a bridge year under section 1
29 of this act, may apply to a participating institution of higher
30 education to enroll in courses or programs offered by the institution
31 of higher education.

32 (b) The course sections and programs offered as running start
33 courses must also be open for registration to matriculated students
34 at the participating institution of higher education and may not be a
35 course consisting solely of high school students offered at a high
36 school campus.

37 (c) A student receiving home-based instruction enrolling in a
38 public high school for the sole purpose of participating in courses
39 or programs offered by institutions of higher education shall not be

1 counted by the school district in any required state or federal
2 accountability reporting if the student's parents or guardians filed
3 a declaration of intent to provide home-based instruction and the
4 student received home-based instruction during the school year before
5 the school year in which the student intends to participate in
6 courses or programs offered by the institution of higher education.
7 Students receiving home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW
8 and students attending private schools approved under chapter 28A.195
9 RCW shall not be required to meet the student learning goals or to
10 learn the state learning standards. However, students are eligible to
11 enroll in courses or programs in participating universities only if
12 the board of directors of the student's school district has decided
13 to participate in the program. Participating institutions of higher
14 education, in consultation with school districts, may establish
15 admission standards for these students. If the institution of higher
16 education accepts a secondary school pupil for enrollment under this
17 section, the institution of higher education shall send written
18 notice to the pupil and the pupil's school district within ten days
19 of acceptance. The notice shall indicate the course and hours of
20 enrollment for that pupil.

21 (2) (a) In lieu of tuition and fees, as defined in RCW 28B.15.020
22 and 28B.15.041:

23 (i) Running start students shall pay to the community or
24 technical college all other mandatory fees as established by each
25 community or technical college and, in addition, the state board for
26 community and technical colleges may authorize a fee of up to ten
27 percent of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and
28 28B.15.041; and

29 (ii) All other institutions of higher education operating a
30 running start program may charge running start students a fee of up
31 to ten percent of tuition and fees as defined in RCW 28B.15.020 and
32 28B.15.041 in addition to technology fees.

33 (b) The fees charged under this subsection (2) shall be prorated
34 based on credit load.

35 (c) Students may pay fees under this subsection with advanced
36 college tuition payment program tuition units at a rate set by the
37 advanced college tuition payment program governing body under chapter
38 28B.95 RCW.

39 (3) (a) The institutions of higher education must make available
40 fee waivers for low-income running start students. A student shall be

1 considered low income and eligible for a fee waiver upon proof that
2 the student is currently qualified to receive free or reduced-price
3 lunch. Acceptable documentation of low-income status may also
4 include, but is not limited to, documentation that a student has been
5 deemed eligible for free or reduced-price lunches in the last five
6 years, or other criteria established in the institution's policy.

7 (b) (i) By the beginning of the 2020-21 school year, school
8 districts, upon knowledge of a low-income student's enrollment in
9 running start, must provide documentation of the student's low-income
10 status, under (a) of this subsection, directly to institutions of
11 higher education.

12 (ii) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this
13 specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public
14 instruction, in consultation with the Washington student achievement
15 council, shall develop a centralized process for school districts to
16 provide students' low-income status to institutions of higher
17 education to meet the requirements of (b) (i) of this subsection.

18 (c) Institutions of higher education, in collaboration with
19 relevant student associations, shall aim to have students who can
20 benefit from fee waivers take advantage of these waivers.
21 Institutions shall make every effort to communicate to students and
22 their families the benefits of the waivers and provide assistance to
23 students and their families on how to apply. Information about
24 waivers shall, to the greatest extent possible, be incorporated into
25 financial aid counseling, admission information, and individual
26 billing statements. Institutions also shall, to the greatest extent
27 possible, use all means of communication, including but not limited
28 to web sites, online catalogues, admission and registration forms,
29 mass email messaging, social media, and outside marketing to ensure
30 that information about waivers is visible, compelling, and reaches
31 the maximum number of students and families that can benefit.

32 (4) The pupil's school district shall transmit to the institution
33 of higher education an amount per each full-time equivalent college
34 student at statewide uniform rates for vocational and nonvocational
35 students. The superintendent of public instruction shall separately
36 calculate and allocate moneys appropriated for basic education under
37 RCW 28A.150.260 to school districts for purposes of making such
38 payments and for granting school districts seven percent thereof to
39 offset program related costs. The calculations and allocations shall
40 be based upon the estimated statewide annual average per full-time

1 equivalent high school student allocations under RCW 28A.150.260,
2 excluding small high school enhancements, and applicable rules
3 adopted under chapter 34.05 RCW. The superintendent of public
4 instruction, participating institutions of higher education, and the
5 state board for community and technical colleges shall consult on the
6 calculation and distribution of the funds. The funds received by the
7 institution of higher education from the school district shall not be
8 deemed tuition or operating fees and may be retained by the
9 institution of higher education. A student enrolled under this
10 subsection shall be counted for the purpose of meeting enrollment
11 targets in accordance with terms and conditions specified in the
12 omnibus appropriations act.

13 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.600.330 and 1994 c 205 s 4 are each amended to
14 read as follows:

15 (1) A pupil who enrolls in an institution of higher education in
16 grade eleven may not enroll in postsecondary courses under RCW
17 28A.600.300 through 28A.600.390 for high school credit and
18 postsecondary credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework
19 for two academic years. A pupil who first enrolls in an institution
20 of higher education in grade twelve may not enroll in postsecondary
21 courses under this section for high school credit and postsecondary
22 credit for more than the equivalent of the coursework for one
23 academic year.

24 (2) The credit limitations in this section do not apply to
25 students participating in the bridge year pilot program created in
26 section 1 of this act.

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 6.** This act expires July 31, 2023.

28 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 7.** This act is necessary for the immediate
29 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of
30 the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes
31 effect immediately.

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