

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5048

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As of January 11, 2023

**Title:** An act relating to eliminating college in the high school fees.

**Brief Description:** Eliminating college in the high school fees.

**Sponsors:** Senators Mullet, Rolfes, Billig, Hasegawa, Hawkins, Holy, Lias, Nguyen, Pedersen, Valdez, Wagoner, Warnick, Wellman and Wilson, C..

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Higher Education & Workforce Development: 1/11/23.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires institutions of higher education to provide enrollment and registration in College in the High School (CHS) courses at no cost to students in grades 10 through 12 at public high schools.
- Requires the Legislature to appropriate funds to fund CHS courses, at inflation-adjusted rates.
- Directs high schools that provide a CHS course to include information in the course catalog that there is no fee for students to enroll in a CHS course.

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

**Staff:** Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

**Background:** 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 9 through 12. Students who participate in a CHS program are able to earn both high school and postsecondary credit by completing postsecondary level courses

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with a passing grade. Programs are established in individual agreements between the schools and colleges or universities.

The maximum per college credit tuition fee for a program course is \$65 per college credit, adjusted for inflation. High schools that offer CHS programs must provide general information about the program to all students in grades 8 through 12 and their guardians, as well as provide certain program information in course catalogues.

State funding for CHS programs does not include funding for students who are in or eligible for enrollment in grades 9 or 10. For students in grades 11 or 12, funding is prioritized according to statute with a limit of ten credits, although a lower limit may be established in the Omnibus Appropriations Act.

Subsidies may also be provided for students who meet financial aid 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.

In state statute, the term "institutions of higher education" is defined as the state universities, the regional universities, The Evergreen State College, and community and technical colleges.

**Summary of Bill:** Beginning September 1, 2023, institutions of higher education must provide enrollment and registration in CHS courses at no cost for students in the 10th, 11th, and 12th grade at public high schools.

Beginning with the 2023-2025 Omnibus Operating Appropriation Act (operating budget), the Legislature must pass an operating budget that appropriates state funding for CHS courses administered at public secondary schools. State appropriation shall be calculated using the total CHS courses administered in the prior academic year, funded at a rate of:

- \$6,000 per CHS course administered by a four-year institution of higher education; or
- \$3,000 per CHS course administered by a community or technical college.

Beginning with fiscal year 2025, the rate per CHS course must be adjusted annually for inflation as measured by the consumer price index.

High schools that provide a CHS course must include information in the course catalog that there is no fee for students to enroll in a CHS course. Previous CHS funding statutes are repealed, including statutes permitting institutions of higher education to charge students a per-credit tuition fee.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 6, 2023.

**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: Currently, families have to pay around \$330 per course for CHS programs. The numbers in the bill have been verified with institutions, with the goal of not having any backward financial progress. The bill will make it easier for students to earn college credit without some of the logistical difficulties that might exist in other programs. The bill would make it possible for students to earn credits that otherwise would not have access and is a game-changer in increasing equity and access. The bill makes these courses more attractive and will increase access. CHS courses are some of the most accessible dual-credit courses, but students of color and low-income students have lower participation rates. Studies have shown that students who take dual-credit courses are more likely to graduate college and to graduate on-time. Some students have experience significant financial hardship in paying for these courses. Students in rural districts do not realistically have the option of utilizing Running Start students. Even though fees can be around 75% off normal fee costs, they still present a financial barrier to students. This bill will help the state achieve goals of having 70% of students achieve a postsecondary credential by 2030. Getting students to and through postsecondary education is more crucial for industries than ever.

OTHER: The community and technical colleges support the intent behind the bill, there is concern about differential model and collective bargaining provisions that are tied to CHS dollars. The cost of administering the programs are broadly similar between 2-year and 4-year institutions.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Mark Mullet, Prime Sponsor; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State PTA; Tim Stetter, Director - UW in the High School; Jim Kowalkowski, Rural Education Center; Amanda Kost, University of Washington Faculty; Steve DuPont, Central Washington University; Bill Lyne, United Faculty of Washington State; Neil Strege, Washington Roundtable; Juliet Schindler, College Success Foundation; Terri Standish-Kuon, Independent Colleges of Washington; Jenny Plaja, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

OTHER: Jamie Traugott, State Board for Community & Technical Colleges; Michael Reese, Bellevue College in the High School.

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