

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2789

As Reported by House Committee On:
Commerce & Labor

Title: An act relating to expanding opportunities for graduating secondary school students to enter apprenticeships.

Brief Description: Expanding apprenticeship opportunities for high school graduates.

Sponsors: Representatives Quall, Conway, Wood, Hasegawa, Haigh, Ormsby, Murray, Chase, Kessler, Morrell, Green, Roberts, McCoy, Moeller, Simpson, Sells, Lantz, McDermott, Ericks, Hankins, Kagi and Hudgins; by request of Governor Gregoire.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Commerce & Labor: 1/26/06, 2/2/06 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Authorizes existing Centers of Excellence and other colleges identified by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council to act as brokers of relevant information and resources.
- Requires the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council to lead an educational outreach program about apprenticeships for middle and secondary school students, educators, and parents.
- Requires the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council to oversee and approve direct-entry programs, including awarding 10 incentive grants to school districts for personnel to negotiate and implement agreements with local apprenticeships.
- Establishes four pilot programs to expand student enrollment in pre-apprenticeship programs.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a workgroup to identify barriers and opportunities for further expansion and scale-up of pre-apprenticeship programs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE & LABOR

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Conway, Chair; Wood, Vice Chair; Hudgins, Kenney and McCoy.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 4 members: Representatives Condotta, Ranking Minority Member; Chandler, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Crouse and Holmquist.

Staff: Sarah Dylag (786-7109).

Background:

Apprenticeship Programs

Apprenticeship programs enable individuals to learn trades and occupations through a combination of on-the-job training and related supplemental instruction. Apprenticeship programs are sponsored by joint employer and labor groups, individual employers, and/or employer associations. The sponsor of an apprenticeship program plans, administers, and pays for the program.

The Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) is the administrative arm of the apprenticeship section of the Department of Labor and Industries. The WSATC has the authority to, among other things, establish standards for apprenticeship programs and assist program sponsors with local administration of training programs.

Secondary School Pre-Apprenticeship Programs

Some high schools in Washington have established programs in partnership with local apprenticeships. The programs allow students to earn high school credits through courses at the high school and work-based internships at an employer's job site. Upon graduation, the students who complete these programs are typically qualified to enter directly into a full apprenticeship.

Centers of Excellence

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges designates certain community and technical colleges as Centers of Excellences to focus on a "targeted industry." A targeted industry is defined as one that is strategic to the economic growth of a region or the state. The mission of Centers of Excellence includes providing responsive education, translating industry research into best practices, and building a competitive workforce.

Running Start

The 1990 Legislature created the Running Start program as part of the "Learning by Choice" law. The law was designed to expand educational options for students in public high schools. Through Running Start, qualified students in grades 11 or 12 may take college level courses in any of the state's 32 community and technical colleges. Running Start students earn both high school and college credit for successfully completed college courses. The school districts in which the students are enrolled must reimburse the colleges and universities for their students' participation in the program.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Centers of Excellence

The existing community and technical college Centers of Excellence and other colleges identified by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC) as having a high density of apprenticeship programs must "act as a broker of relevant information and resources." These entities must also aid all local school districts in meeting the goals of the bill, in conjunction with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI).

Educational Outreach by the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council

The WSATC educational outreach program must be conducted in conjunction with individual state-approved apprenticeship programs and OSPI. As part of the educational outreach program, the WSATC must communicate workforce projections to OSPI to distribute to all local school districts. Appropriate activities of the WSATC include curriculum development, assistance with the establishment of practical opportunities for students, and seeking the advice and participation of industry and labor interests.

The WSATC also must approve and oversee direct-entry programs for graduating secondary students into building and construction-related apprenticeships by:

- assisting school districts in "using and leveraging existing resources;"
- developing guidelines, including guidelines that ensure that graduating secondary school students will receive appropriate education and training and will have the opportunity to transition to local apprenticeship programs. The guidelines must be developed with input from OSPI, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Work Force Training and Education Coordinating Board, the Governor's Policy Office, and other interested stakeholders for direct-entry programs operated by apprenticeship programs; and
- awarding 10 incentive grants to school districts statewide. The grants are to be awarded based on guidelines established by the WSATC and are to be used solely for personnel to negotiate and implement agreements with local apprenticeships to accept graduating high school students with appropriate training into apprenticeship programs.

WSATC Reporting Requirements

Beginning December 1, 2006 and annually thereafter the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council must report to the Legislature on the following:

- the guidelines established by WSATC;
- the names of the school districts receiving incentive grants;
- the results of negotiations between school districts receiving incentive grants and local apprenticeship programs;

- a list of apprenticeship programs that have agreed, pursuant to negotiated agreements, to accept qualified graduating secondary students; and
- the number of qualified graduating secondary students entering into apprenticeship programs each year through direct-entry programs.

Pilot Projects

Subject to funding, up to four pilot projects are created to expand student enrollment in pre-apprenticeship programs, particularly building and construction apprenticeships. The OSPI in consultation with the WSATC, must award grants on a competitive basis for these pilot projects. Two of the pilot projects must involve Skill Centers and two of the pilot projects must involve community and technical colleges. At least one of the pilots is encouraged to involve small or rural high schools.

To review grant applications, the OSPI and the WSATC must convene a review committee representing the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, business and labor interests with ties to apprenticeship fields, apprenticeship program coordinators, and career and technical educators in the public schools.

The pilot projects must be ready to enroll students in 2006-07 and must operate for three years. To the maximum extent possible, students in the pilot projects must receive dual credit through Tech Prep or Running Start.

In addition to enrolling students in career and technical programs that enable them to enter into apprenticeships upon graduation, pilot projects may also do the following:

- develop or modify curriculum to align with apprenticeship entry requirements and skill expectations or to adjust curriculum to the secondary level;
- negotiate agreements to use local or regional apprenticeship program training facilities to offer programs;
- negotiate agreements with local or regional apprenticeship programs, community or technical colleges, or other contractors to provide specialized instruction within the program;
- use guidelines and assistance from the WSATC, negotiate direct-entry agreements with local or regional apprenticeship programs to accept pilot project graduates into the programs;
- conduct marketing, advertising, and communication about the pilot project to area teachers, counselors, students, and parents;
- provide tutoring and other academic support services; and
- offer other support services such as counseling, community service referral, and assistance for low-income students such as tools, supplies, books, or transportation to non-school facilities.

Funding for Pilots

The pilots programs are established "subject to funding." The funding formula for a Skill Center that enrolls a high school student in a pilot project is modified so that it can be up to 1.2 full time equivalent.

The funding for a Community and Technical College that enrolls a high school student in a pilot project is through Running Start, and the Running Start funding applies even if the student is only receiving high school credit for the course and not college credit.

The OSPI and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges may jointly adopt rules regarding enrollment reporting and allocation of funds.

The OSPI Workgroup

The OSPI must convene a workgroup to identify barriers and opportunities for further expansion and scale-up of pre-apprenticeship programs, particularly building and construction apprenticeships. Recommendations from the workgroup are due to the Legislature by December 1, 2006. This report may be submitted in conjunction with the report required from the WSATC. The workgroup expires on August 31, 2009.

The workgroup must include representatives from the WSATC, local or regional apprenticeship programs, Community and Technical Colleges, high schools, and Skill Centers. Issues to be considered by the workgroup may include:

- expanding participation and opportunities in Running Start for career-technical courses, including the role of using parent involvement in guidance and counseling for students to expand participation;
- "highly qualified teacher" requirements;
- cross-crediting of career-technical and core academic courses;
- the funding model for skills centers;
- benchmarks to measure outcomes from the pilot projects;
- the impact of current student assessment and achievement requirements on student participation in apprenticeship preparation programs and opportunities for developing alternative assessment and achievement requirements.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill adds provisions that were not contained in the original bill. The original bill did not establish pilot projects or an OSPI-convened workgroup. Under the original bill, the duties of the Centers of Excellence were limited to compiling and providing information on grants, scholarships, job openings, and growth industries. Under the original bill, the WSATC did not communicate workforce projections to the OSPI to distribute to all local school districts. The original bill did not require the WSATC to report to the Legislature.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 3, 2006.

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

Testimony For: (In support) When the Governor gave her State of the State address she mentioned Running Start for the trades, looking at the K-12 system and real work opportunities for the building and construction trades. Running Start is a good program for high school juniors or seniors and this is a good proposal. This bill comes from the Washington Learns Task Force. There is a substitute bill that expands the Governor's proposal and creates four pilot projects for pre-apprenticeship training. People are already interested in these pilots and schools are already doing this type of work. Spokane Skill Center is already working on these types of programs.

There is a growing demand for highly skilled workers and there is likely to be a shortage of skilled workers in the future. In a number of ways, this bill provides guidance and opportunities for high school students to choose careers in trades and technical fields and to begin thinking about this early in their secondary school career. It provides an opportunity for other types of learning and builds a bridge that hasn't existed. In addition, this bill will help students make choices to get good training for high paying jobs and it is clearly in Washington's best interest to educate youth to enter into building trades. High school students don't know about other options and it is awareness of programs and opportunities helps students make choices about their lives.

There are a handful of pre-apprenticeship programs operating today. One example of another type of pre-apprenticeship program, although not for high school students, is Helmets-to-Hardhats for the military and it works. It allows direct-entry to apprenticeships from the military and allows the person to apply related career hours from the military toward hours in the apprenticeship program. The demonstration grants in this bill will help create high school programs and provide ideas for putting these programs into place statewide.

There are fiscal concerns about a proposed substitute that contains pilot projects that were not contained in the original bill, although the concept of the proposed substitute can be supported.

(With concerns) There is concern about this bill, but not with the concept or goal. The problem isn't with apprenticeship; it is getting attention focused on opportunities when students are in middle and high school. The K12 curriculum does not honor the idea that building and construction trades are viable career opportunities. This bill should address that issue.

The WSATC has a role to play in this bill, but the bill should also emphasize the importance and responsibility of local apprenticeship programs. The bill should be clearer about responsibilities and directives. The WSATC is directed make grants to "negotiate and implement agreements" and those seem to be two different activities. There is no requirement for the school districts to do their part to make these programs successful.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Dave Johnson, Washington Building Trades; Heather Peterson; Rob Doolin; Amber Doolin; Bob Abbott; Jonathan Platt, JM Martinac Building Corporation; Brett Olson; David Borolsky, Bates Technical College; Patrick Woods, State Apprenticeship Council; Melinda Nichols, State Apprenticeship Council; Amy Brackenbury, Building Industry Association of Washington; Jan Rohila, Building Industry Association of Washington; John Aultmar, New Market Skills Center; Cathy Heryford; Chris Heryford; Madeleine Thompson, Workforce Board; and Randy Loomans, Operating Engineers.

(Concerns) Rick Slunaker, Associated General Contractors; Larry Stevens, National Electrical Contractors Association and Mechanical Contractors Association; and Heather Hansen, Washington Nursery and Landscape Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.