
Higher Education Committee

HB 3263

Brief Description: Requiring dual credit strategic planning.

Sponsors: Representatives Wallace, Kenney, Kagi and Ormsby.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to convene a workgroup to develop a strategic plan for statewide coordination of dual credit programs. The plan must analyze the goals, benefits, barriers to access, and costs associated with each program and make recommendations on how to increase access while addressing and containing costs.

Hearing Date: 2/4/08

Staff: Andi Smith (786-7304).

Background:

A variety of education programs allow high school students to earn post-secondary course credit while also earning credit toward high school graduation. Examples of dual credit programs include Running Start, College in the High School, Tech Prep, and International Baccalaureate. Students who participate in these dual credit programs have the opportunity to graduate from high school with all or a portion of their intended college course work already completed.

In College in the High School, students complete college level work while staying on their high school campuses. High school teachers typically form a relationship with a college or university and receive adjunct, extension, or lecturer status. They work with a professor to align a particular high school course with a college level course published in the college catalog. The college course is then taught to high school students by the high school teacher during the regular school day. Students usually pay a fee for this program that varies based on the area of study. Other funding, fees, and eligibility requirements are negotiated by participating schools through a local contract.

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate also allows students to take college-level courses while staying on their high school campuses. For both of these programs, students

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complete courses taught by high school teachers but then must pass a standardized examination at the end of the course. Credit is awarded based a student's score on the exam. For Advanced Placement, students score from zero to five points. Credit is usually awarded for scores of three or higher, though each college or university determines the required scores for their respective institutions. Minimum scores to qualify for credit may also vary by subject area.

Running Start is a somewhat different model. Through the program, students have an opportunity to study on a college campus while acquiring credits that count toward both high school and college graduation. The students take courses from college faculty and do not pay tuition for Running Start classes. If the student passes the college course, he or she receives the same amount of credit as any other college student taking the course. The state provides funding that covers the amount of time the students spend in either high school or college. School districts retain seven percent of the basic education allocation and provide the remainder to colleges or universities.

Tech Prep is a cooperative effort between K-12 schools, community and technical colleges, and the business community to develop applied integrated, academic and technical programs. These professional technical courses are taught on high school campuses by high school instructors. The instructors work with local colleges to assure the courses are taught at the college-level and articulate to the college program. Each of the state's 22 Tech Prep consortia have developed competency- based articulation agreements between high schools and colleges that help students transition from high school into post-secondary professional technical programs. Through Tech Prep articulation agreements, colleges award credit to students who successfully complete college-equivalent courses and programs with a "B" or better while still in high school. Articulation agreements between the individual college and school define the criteria for equivalency and the granting of credit.

Summary of Bill:

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must convene a workgroup including representatives from the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Workforce Training Education and Coordinating Board, the Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Council of Presidents to develop a strategic plan for statewide coordination of dual credit programs.

For each program, the workgroup must articulate the purpose and definition, goals, personnel required to administer and teach each program, benefits, and barriers to access. The workgroup must also specify the average cost for each program to the student, the state, the common schools, and the institutions of higher educations.

The workgroup must recommend a strategic plan for coordinating the administration of dual credit programs based on these findings. The strategic plan must set goals for increased student enrollment, identify strategies to increase access and efficiency, as well as options for addressing costs to the state, schools, and institutions of higher education. The plan must also contain strategies to contain costs for students and their families.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 31, 2008.

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