

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 2697

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As of Second Reading

**Title:** An act relating to a weighted grade point average for purposes of the standardized high school transcript.

**Brief Description:** Concerning a weighted grade point average for purposes of the standardized high school transcript.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ortiz-Self, Stonier, Lytton, Santos, Ryu, Roberts, Magendanz, Jinkins, Sells, Ormsby, Stanford, Springer, Takko, Fey, Bergquist, Freeman, Tarleton and Riccelli.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 2/3/14, 2/5/14.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop a common method for assigning additional weight to Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses on the standardized high school transcript.
- Requires school districts to use the common method beginning in 2014-15 for purposes of calculating a student's grade point average.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

**Background:**

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with public colleges and universities and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, is charged with developing a standardized high school transcript for use in all public schools. The rules regarding the standardized transcript require a common method for calculating a student's grade point average (GPA) and for recording courses taken and credits earned.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Credits earned through the following courses are noted on the transcript with a designated letter:

- Running Start is noted "R."
- Advanced Placement is noted "A."
- International Baccalaureate is noted "I."
- College in the High School is noted "C."
- Tech Prep is noted "T."
- Honors is noted "H."

However, there is no modification in the calculation of the GPA for these courses.

Some states have adopted state-level uniform grading policies that include higher weighting in the GPA for certain advanced courses.

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**Summary of Bill:**

The SPI, in consultation with the other education agencies that develop the standardized high school transcript, must develop a common method for assigning additional weight for Advanced Placement and higher-level International Baccalaureate courses for the purposes of calculating a student's GPA. Beginning in the 2014-15 school year, all school districts must use this method for the standardized transcript.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) There are many students competing with students from other states for college admission and scholarships. Some make accommodation for weighted GPAs, but not all of them. Some scholarship committees do not have the capacity or technical understanding to standardize the GPAs. There is a desire to make sure that there is a level playing field for Washington students. Counselors encourage students to enroll in more rigorous courses, but there is pushback from students for fear of hurting their GPA. This bill represents a way to encourage students to seek additional rigor in their course work. There is a need for further conversation about the procedures for weighting the GPA and its possible impact, so the committee should consider an amendment to make the bill into a feasibility study in order to hear more voices on the matter.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Representative Ortiz-Self, prime sponsor.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.