

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6248

As Passed Senate, February 9, 2018

Title: An act relating to granting of high school diplomas by community or technical colleges.

Brief Description: Granting of high school diplomas by community or technical colleges.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman, Zeiger, Kuderer, Hasegawa, Mullet, Keiser, Lias and Conway; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/25/18, 1/29/18 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed Senate: 2/09/18, 47-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the category of students who may receive a diploma from a community or technical college to include: (1) individuals enrolled in a statewide dropout reengagement program and (2) individuals aged 16 to 21 not enrolled in a publicly funded K-12 program.
- Specifies that students issued a high school diploma by a community or technical college may be counted in a school district's graduation rate if the student is funded and enrolled in a public K-12 school.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Wellman, Chair; Rolfes, Vice Chair; Zeiger, Ranking Member; Billig, Hawkins, Hunt, Mullet, Padden, Pedersen and Rivers.

Staff: Benjamin Omdal (786-7442)

Background: Issuance of High School Diplomas Issued by Community and Technical Colleges (CTCs). Individuals who meet the requirements for high school completion must be awarded a diploma from a CTC, subject to rules adopted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the State Board of Education (SBE).

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.

CTCs are also required to grant high school diplomas and certificates, upon written request, to:

- Running Start students who complete an associate degree program;
- individuals 21 years or older who complete an associate degree program; and
- high school students enrolled in technical colleges who complete an associate degree program.

Individuals 21 years or older, who receive a diploma from a CTC, are not eligible for basic education funding.

High School District Graduation Rates. Each school district in Washington must annually report graduation rates to OSPI. These graduation rates are used for a variety of purposes, including monitoring district academic progress and for required reporting under federal law.

Dropout Reengagement Programs. In 2010, the Legislature created a statutory framework for a statewide dropout reengagement system. This system provides educational access and opportunities to students aged 16 to 21 who have either dropped out of high school or are not accumulating sufficient credits to earn their diploma before age 21. Programs in this system must offer academic instruction, academic and career counseling, and assistance with services and resources that support at-risk youth. School districts may enter into interlocal agreements with an educational service district, CTC, or other public entity to provide this program.

Summary of Bill: High School Diplomas. Two categories of individuals shall be awarded a diploma upon written request. These are:

- students enrolled in a statewide dropout reengagement program who complete an associate degree program; and
- individuals aged 16 to 21 who complete an associate degree program that are not enrolled in a publicly funded K-12 program.

Graduation Rates. Students issued a diploma by a CTC may be included in district graduation rates if those students are funded and enrolled in a public K-12 school. Students who are not funded and enrolled in a public K-12 school may not be included in the district's graduation rate.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: The additional categories will increase opportunities for diplomas for youth. The bill would provide equity for students in these categories as they currently have additional requirements when compared to Running Start and other students. The bill will increase access to further educational aid or job

opportunities. Under current law, students have to plan their academic plans around their 21st birthday, delaying their career, educational endeavors, and contributions to society.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Lisa Wellman, Prime Sponsor; Dixie Grunenfelder, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Troy Goracke, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Lionel Candido, Case Manager, Green River College; Tunamanaia Julius Hunkin, citizen.

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