

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1760

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to expanding access to dual credit programs.

Brief Description: Expanding access to dual credit programs.

Sponsors: Representatives Paul, Berg, Johnson, J., Valdez, Fey, Ramel, Santos, Sullivan, Slatter, Bergquist, Pollet, Stonier, Ormsby and Taylor.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/21/22, 1/25/22, 1/28/22 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Lowers dual enrollment program costs for eligible students with financial need by creating a subsidy program, reducing per college credit fees for eligible college in the high school students, and revising eligibility for the Running Start Program tuition fee waiver.
- Makes the Running Start Summer School Pilot Program a permanent program and changes provisions related to the participation of institutions of higher education and students.
- Expands requirements to notify students and their parents or legal guardians about dual credit programs and the dual enrollment subsidy program.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Ybarra, Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Bergquist, Callan, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Steele and Stonier.

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

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Walsh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

Dual Enrollment Programs.

Dual, or concurrent, enrollment programs allow high school students to earn high school and postsecondary credit at the same time. These programs can be offered at an institution of higher education (running start [RS] courses) or at a high school (college in the high school [CHS] courses and career and technical education dual credit courses).

Students in grades 9 through 12 are eligible to enroll in CHS courses, which are taught by high school teachers, with college curricula, and overseen by faculty and staff at public institutions of higher education. Dual credit is awarded to students who pass a CHS course. The maximum per college credit tuition fee an institution of higher education may charge for a CHS course is \$65, annually adjusted for inflation.

Students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to apply for admission to a participating public institution of higher education to enroll as an RS student. Students in the RS Program do not pay tuition, but do pay for educational materials, mandatory fees, and transportation costs. Institutions of higher education must make fee waivers available for low-income RS students. The waiver is funded out of each institution's operating budget, not additional state funding. In addition, many RS students receive book loan funds through college foundations.

In 2020 legislation was enacted that created a two-year RS Summer School Pilot Program (RS Pilot) to evaluate interest in and barriers to expanding the RS Program to include the summer term. Three community colleges are participating in the RS Pilot. In addition to students eligible for the RS Program, people who graduated from a participating high school in the current school year and who have five or fewer college credits to earn before meeting associate degree requirements are eligible to earn a maximum of five college credits through the RS Pilot. A report to the Legislature with findings and recommendations regarding the RS Pilot, including recommending whether to expand the RS Program to include the summer term, is required by November 10, 2022.

State Funding for Dual Credit Program Costs.

The Washington Dual Enrollment Scholarship Pilot Program (Scholarship Pilot) was established in 2019 to provide eligible students with scholarships to participate in RS and CHS programs. An eligible student is a student who: qualifies for free or reduced-price lunch; is enrolled in one or more dual credit programs; and has at least a 2.0 grade point average. Under the Scholarship Pilot, an RS student may receive a scholarship to cover: mandatory fees, prorated based on credit load; course or laboratory fees; and a textbook

voucher worth \$10 per enrolled credit, up to a maximum of 15 credits per year. Under the Scholarship Pilot, a CHS student may receive a scholarship for college credit tuition fees. The Scholarship Pilot is funded at \$750,000 per year. The Scholarship Pilot expires July 1, 2025, pending sunset review by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee.

The 2021-23 State Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act appropriated to the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction \$4,894,000 for fiscal year 2022 and \$4,894,000 for fiscal year 2023 to administer programs and grants to increase equitable access to dual credit programs, including subsidizing or eliminating student costs for dual credit courses or exams. While not specifically required, these funds may be used to implement the following programs:

- Legislation enacted in 2013 established the Academic Acceleration Incentive (AAI) Program to support school districts with costs associated with offering dual credit courses to high school students. When the state specifically funds the AAI Program, which it has not done since the 2019-20 school year, half of the funds must be allocated on a competitive basis as one-time grants for high schools to expand the availability of dual credit courses; and the other half of the funds must be allocated as an incentive award to school districts for each student who earned dual credit in specified courses offered by a high school in the previous year.
- Legislation enacted in 2015 established requirements for state-funded CHS per credit allocations and per credit subsidies. When the state provides funding specifically for these purposes, which it has not done since the 2017-18 school year, high schools with CHS programs may qualify to receive allocations or subsidies per college credit for CHS students in grades 11 and 12.

Dual Credit Program Notifications.

School districts are required to notify students and their parents or guardians about advanced courses or programs available to students, including dual credit courses or programs. High schools that offer CHS programs must provide general information about the CHS program to all students in grades 8 through 12 and to their parents and guardians. In addition, specific information must be included in the high school catalog or equivalent, for example, a description and breakdown of the fees charged to students who choose to enroll in a CHS course to earn both high school and college credit. School districts must provide general information about the RS Program to all students in grades 10 through 12 and their parents and guardians, including information about the opportunity to enroll in the RS Program through online courses available at institutions of higher education.

Washington College Grant.

The Washington College Grant Program provides postsecondary education grants to students who demonstrate financial need and meet other criteria. Financial need is based on the state's median family income (MFI) and the student's family size. Beginning with academic year 2020-21, students with family incomes between zero and 55 percent of the state MFI, adjusted for family size, must receive the maximum grant amount.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Subsidy Program for Students' Dual Credit Course Costs.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must administer a program to subsidize certain dual, or concurrent, enrollment course costs for eligible students. "Eligible students" means students: (a) who are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals based on the income of the students' household; (b) who are categorically eligible for free school meals without an application and not subject to income verification; and (c) whose parent or legal guardian attests that they demonstrate financial need equivalent to the financial need required to receive the maximum Washington college grant, using the attestation form developed as described below.

For eligible students enrolled in college in the high school (CHS) courses, the program must subsidize permitted per college credit tuition fees. For eligible students enrolled in career and technical education dual credit courses, the program must subsidize transcription fees assessed by the institution of higher education.

For eligible students enrolled in running start (RS) courses, the program must subsidize: (1) any student-voted fees, technology fees, course fees, laboratory fees, or other fees required for enrollment, up to 18 credits per quarter, that were not required to be waived by the institution of higher education; and (2) textbooks and other required course materials. To subsidize these RS costs, the OSPI must transmit to each public institution of higher education \$1,000 per full-time equivalent RS student per academic year. At the end of the academic year, any unused funds must be returned to the OSPI.

The Washington Student Achievement Council, in consultation with the OSPI, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, public four-year institutions of higher education, and other interested parties must develop and publish an income attestation form to be used to determine student eligibility for the dual, or concurrent, enrollment course cost subsidy program, reduced per college credit tuition fees for CHS courses, and fee waivers for RS courses.

The OSPI must collaborate with the institutions of higher education to facilitate the identification of eligible students who qualify for reduced per college credit tuition fees for CHS courses or fee waivers for RS courses.

The statutes establishing the Academic Acceleration Incentive Program, the CHS per credit allocations and per credit subsidies, and the Washington Dual Enrollment Scholarship Pilot Program are repealed.

College in the High School.

For eligible students, as defined for the subsidy program described above, the maximum per college credit tuition fee for a CHS course is \$42.50, annually adjusted for inflation as specified. With regard to the information that must be included in the high school catalog

or equivalent, the statement "college credit earned upon successful completion of a program course may count only as elective credit if transferred to another institution of higher education" is changed to "most but not all institutions of higher education may recognize and accept this credit."

Running Start.

The definition of "eligible students" used for the subsidy program described above is made applicable to fee waivers for low-income RS students. The RS Summer School Pilot Program is made a permanent program. The number of community colleges that may participate in the program increased from three to six, and a public four-year institution of higher education may also participate. A student who graduated from a participating high school in the current school year with 10, rather than five, or fewer college credits to earn before meeting associate degree requirements may earn 10, rather than five, credits per summer academic term. The date of the required report on findings and recommendations for the program is changed from November 10, 2022, to November 1, 2024.

Dual Credit Program Notifications.

Each quarter or trimester, public schools that serve students in any of grades 9 through 12 must provide, via email and other methods, to students and their parents or legal guardians information on each available dual credit program and information about the dual, or concurrent, enrollment course cost subsidy program, including the income attestation form. To the extent feasible, the dual credit program information must be translated into the primary language of each parent or legal guardian. Public schools may consolidate this notification with other required dual credit program notifications.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute makes the following changes to the original bill:

- uses the term "eligible student," rather than "low-income student," and adds criteria for determining a student's eligibility based on the financial need of the student or their household;
- directs the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to collaborate with institutions of higher education to facilitate identification of eligible students who qualify for the new state subsidy program and other programs that lower dual credit program costs;
- requires the Washington Student Achievement Council to develop and publish an income attestation form to determine student eligibility for programs that lower dual credit program costs.
- adds provision of information about the new state subsidy program, including the income attestation form, to the required notification about dual credit programs;
- modifies a statement, related to the College in the High School Program, that must be in a high school catalog to "most but not all institutions of higher education may recognize and accept this credit;" and
- changes the Running Start Summer School Program by: (1) adding selection and

participation of a public four-year institution of higher education; and (2) allowing participation of recent high school graduates with 10, rather than five, or fewer college credits to earn before meeting associate degree requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Preliminary fiscal note available. New fiscal note requested on January 28, 2022.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) Nearly 70 percent of all jobs in Washington require a postsecondary credential, but overall credential attainment falls short of this. Dual credit courses give students the opportunity to start postsecondary education in high school. These courses correlate with higher rates of postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and attainment. Dual credit courses help to reduce students' postsecondary education debt. Dual credit programs play an important role in the education system, for families, and in the economy of the state.

The state community and technical colleges (CTCs) serve about 32,000 running start (RS) students, 12,000 career and technical education (CTE) dual credit students, and 6,500 college in the high school (CHS) students. The CTCs provide financial assistance to almost a third of the dual credit population. Even with this assistance, financial barriers continue to prevent students who are black, Indigenous, or people of color and students with financial need from accessing these programs. Many students are unable to afford to participate in dual credit courses, even with the support that colleges provide. This bill is a great start towards making these courses more affordable by covering fees, textbooks, and materials for RS courses, decreasing tuition for CHS courses, and covers transcript fees for career and technical education dual credit courses. This bill will make a difference for low-income students in accessing dual credit courses.

State support should follow students taking dual credit courses at institutions of higher education, including at private not-for-profit colleges and universities. In Eastern Washington, two private institutions account for half of the four-year institutions offering CHS. Setting up dual credit programs requires resources for teacher training, professional development, and student success supports. This bill has the potential to allow students to be able to take advantage of dual credit programs while encouraging more higher education campuses to offer and expand these programs.

Eliminating existing scholarships for materials required for apprenticeships and CTE classes is concerning. In addition to covering transcript fees for CTE classes, transcript fees for

CHS should also be covered. Information about how to obtain transcripts for dual credit courses should be provided to all students' families.

Many students do not know about dual credit programs. The bill expands access by requiring that school districts translate dual credit information into families' primary languages. Notification requirements should include notification about a school district's automatic enrollment policy, which school districts were required to adopt in the 2019 academic acceleration law. The bill repeals the incentive program, which enabled 50 districts to adopt academic acceleration policies before 2019, and now that adoption of these policies is required, the funding can be used for other purposes.

This bill increases participation in RS Summer School Pilot Program (RS Pilot), which began in summer 2021. During the RS Pilot at one CTC, 142 students from five school districts enrolled in 202 classes. These students passed 93 percent of those courses. There was a 1 percent gain in nonwhite students participating in summer compared to the prior academic year. In addition, 94 percent of these students enrolled in the fall quarter, and this is a record persistence rate.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, in partnership with the Council of Presidents, have submitted amendments that provide additional language in the areas of funding, eligibility, and updated terminology. This bill helps to reduce student costs and close opportunity gaps and will have an impact on the state's economy. The bill will help students make course decisions based on career aspirations, rather than what they can afford.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Dave Paul, prime sponsor; Natalya Yudkovsky, Washington State PTA; Virginia Barry, Stand for Children; Jamie Traugott, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges; Anne Molenda, South Puget Sound Community College; Mackenzie Scott, Wenatchee Valley College; and Terri Standish-Kuon, Independent Colleges of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Charlie Brown, Tacoma Public Schools; David Buri, Eastern Washington University; Tim Stetter, UW in the High School-University of Washington; Neil Strege, Washington Roundtable; Joe Dacca, University of Washington; and Steve DuPont.