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**SENATE BILL 5617**

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**State of Washington 68th Legislature 2023 Regular Session**

**By** Senators Wellman, Nguyen, Hasegawa, Liias, Lovelett, Nobles, and C. Wilson

AN ACT Relating to facilitating course equivalency agreements between skill centers and school districts; amending RCW 28A.230.097, 28A.300.236, and 28A.320.208; reenacting and amending RCW 28A.700.070; and adding a new section to chapter 28A.245 RCW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

NEW SECTION. **Sec.**  A new section is added to chapter 28A.245 RCW to read as follows:

(1) An interdistrict cooperative agreement between a host district and all participating school districts in a skill center under RCW 28A.245.010 must stipulate that any course equivalencies approved under RCW 28A.700.070 or adopted local course equivalencies approved by the host district must be honored by other participating school districts.

(2) The list of approved local and state equivalency courses must be provided to participating districts on an annual basis by September 1st.

(3) Students served at any core, branch, or satellite skill center campus must have access to academic credit for any approved local or state equivalency courses following transcription requirements as outlined in RCW 28A.230.097.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.230.097 and 2019 c 221 s 2 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Each high school or school district board of directors shall adopt course equivalencies for career and technical high school courses offered to students in high schools and skill centers. A career and technical course equivalency may be for whole or partial credit. Each school district board of directors shall develop a course equivalency approval procedure. Boards of directors must approve AP computer science courses as equivalent to high school mathematics or science, and must denote on a student's transcript that AP computer science qualifies as a math-based quantitative course for students who take the course in their senior year.

(2) Until September 1, 2021, a school district board of directors must, at a minimum, grant academic course equivalency for at least one statewide equivalency high school career and technical course from the list of courses approved by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW 28A.700.070.

(3)(a) If the list of courses is revised after the 2015-16 school year, the school district board of directors must grant academic course equivalency based on the revised list beginning with the school year immediately following the revision.

(b) Each high school or school district board of directors may additionally adopt local course equivalencies for career and technical education courses that are not on the list of courses approved by the superintendent of public instruction under RCW 28A.700.070 as local equivalency courses in support of RCW 28A.700.070.

(c) Approved local or state equivalency courses at any core, branch, or satellite skill center must be offered for academic credit for all enrolled students from participating districts.

(4) On and after September 1, 2021, any statewide equivalency course offered by a school district or accessed at a skill center must be offered for academic credit.

(5) Career and technical courses determined to be equivalent to academic core courses, in full or in part, by the high school or school district shall be accepted as meeting core requirements, including graduation requirements, if the courses are recorded on the student's transcript using the equivalent academic high school department designation and title. Full or partial credit shall be recorded as appropriate. The high school or school district shall also issue and keep record of course completion certificates that demonstrate that the career and technical courses were successfully completed as needed for industry certification, college credit, or preapprenticeship, as applicable. The certificate shall be part of the student's high school and beyond plan. The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall develop and make available electronic samples of certificates of course completion.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.300.236 and 2018 c 177 s 303 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the office of the superintendent of public instruction must create methodologies for implementing equivalency crediting on a broader scale across the state and facilitate its implementation including, but not limited to, the following:

(a) Implementing statewide career and technical education course equivalency frameworks authorized under RCW 28A.700.070 and 28A.230.097 for high schools and skill centers ((~~in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics~~)). This may include development of additional equivalency course frameworks in core subject areas, course performance assessments, and development and delivery of professional development for districts and skill centers implementing the career and technical education frameworks; ((~~and~~))

(b) Providing competitive grant funds to school districts to increase the integration and rigor of academic instruction in career and technical education equivalency courses. The grant funds must be used to support teams of general education and career and technical education teachers to convene and design course performance assessments, deepen the understanding of integrating academic and career and technical education in student instruction, and develop professional learning modules for school districts to plan implementation of equivalency crediting; and

(c) Conducting a review of implementation requirements of RCW 28A.230.097 and providing technical assistance to districts to ensure state course equivalencies are being consistently offered for academic credit for students at high schools and skill centers.

(2) Beginning in the 2017-18 school year, school districts shall annually report to the office of the superintendent of public instruction the following information:

(a) The annual number of students participating in state-approved equivalency courses; and

(b) The annual number of state approved equivalency credit courses offered in school districts and skill centers.

(3) Beginning December 1, 2018, and every December 1st thereafter, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall annually submit the following information to the office of the governor, the state board of education, and the appropriate committees of the legislature:

(a) The selected list of equivalent career and technical education courses and their curriculum frameworks that the superintendent of public instruction has approved under RCW 28A.700.070; ((~~and~~))

(b) A summary of the school district information reported under subsection (2) of this section; and

(c) A summary of implementation efforts and review findings determined under subsection (1) of this section, including recommendations for increasing access to equivalency coursework.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.320.208 and 2019 c 252 s 114 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) At the beginning of each school year, school districts must notify parents and guardians of enrolled students from eighth through twelfth grade about each student assessment required by the state, the minimum state-level graduation requirements, and any additional school district graduation requirements. The information may be provided when the student is enrolled, contained in the student or parent handbook, or posted on the school district's website. The notification must include the following:

(a) When each assessment will be administered;

(b) Whether the results of the assessment will be used for program placement or grade-level advancement;

(c) When the assessment results will be released to parents or guardians and whether there will be an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss strategic adjustments; ((~~and~~))

(d) Whether the assessment is required by the school district, state, federal government, or more than one of these entities; and

(e) What opportunities exist at the school district for students to meet credit-based graduation requirements through equivalency courses including those under RCW 28A.230.097 and courses offered by skill centers.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide information to the school districts to enable the districts to provide the information to the parents and guardians in accordance with subsection (1) of this section.

**Sec.**  RCW 28A.700.070 and 2018 c 191 s 1 and 2018 c 177 s 304 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

(1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall support school district efforts under RCW 28A.230.097 to adopt course equivalencies for career and technical courses by:

(a) Recommending career and technical curriculum suitable for course equivalencies;

(b) Publicizing best practices for high schools and school districts in developing and adopting course equivalencies; and

(c) In consultation with the Washington association for career and technical education, providing professional development, technical assistance, and guidance for school districts seeking to expand their lists of equivalent courses.

(2) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall provide professional development, technical assistance, and guidance for school districts to develop career and technical course equivalencies that also qualify as advanced placement courses.

(3) The superintendent of public instruction, in consultation with one or more technical working groups convened for this purpose, shall develop and, after an opportunity for public comment, approve curriculum frameworks for a selected list of career and technical courses that may be offered by high schools or skill centers whose academic standards content is considered equivalent in full or in part to the academic courses that meet high school graduation requirements. These courses may include equivalency to English language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, arts, world languages, or health and physical education. The content of the courses must be aligned with the most current Washington K-12 learning standards in English language arts, mathematics, science, arts, world languages, health and physical education, social studies, and required industry standards. The first list of courses under this subsection must be developed and approved before the 2015-16 school year. Thereafter, the superintendent of public instruction may periodically update or revise the list of courses using the process in this subsection.

(4) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall allocate grant funds to school districts to increase the integration and rigor of academic instruction in career and technical courses. Grant recipients are encouraged to use grant funds to support teams of academic and technical teachers. The superintendent of public instruction may require that grant recipients provide matching resources using federal Carl Perkins funds or other fund sources.

(5) Subject to funds appropriated for this purpose, the superintendent of public instruction shall convene a technical working group to determine potential equivalency development of coursework for technology-based competitive student activities in alignment with the arts and other content areas as applicable. This technical working group shall include educators from school districts or educational service districts that have experience with technology-based competitive student activities. The superintendent of public instruction shall develop and approve course equivalencies to include in the updated list established in subsection (3) of this section based on the work of the technical working group.

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