

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1273

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### As Reported by House Committee On:

Education  
Appropriations

**Title:** An act relating to improving student access to dual credit programs including career and technical education dual credit programs.

**Brief Description:** Improving student access to dual credit programs.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Paul, Eslick, Salahuddin, Bergquist, Reed, Nance, Timmons, Pollet, Fey and Simmons.

### Brief History:

#### Committee Activity:

Education: 2/3/25, 2/17/25 [DPS];

Appropriations: 2/26/25, 2/28/25 [DP2S(w/o sub ED)].

#### Brief Summary of Second Substitute Bill

- Extends a pilot program to increase career and technical education dual credit participation and credit attainment by covering certain expenses of students, colleges, and high schools.
- Directs the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to report to the Legislature on the implementation of the bill and with recommendations for improvements to dual credit policies.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Shavers, Vice Chair; Rude, Ranking Minority Member; Keaton, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Callan, Chase, Couture, Donaghy, Eslick, Marshall, McEntire, Ortiz-Self, Pollet, Reeves,

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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 part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

Rule, Scott, Steele and Stonier.

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

**Background:**

Career and Technical Education Dual Credit.

Dual credit programs allow high school students to earn high school and postsecondary credit at the same time. A career and technical education (CTE) dual credit course is: taught at a high school or skill center by a high school teacher; approved by a partner institution of higher education; and formalized through an articulation agreement that specifies the competencies needed to meet postsecondary course requirements, minimum student grades for awarding postsecondary credit, and a standardized transcription process.

*Data Systems.* The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) maintains a longitudinal data warehouse that includes student enrollment information and student class credit information, including information on enrollment and credits in CTE dual credit courses, called the Comprehensive Education Data and Research System. The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) operates a separate CTE dual credit student registration and course database called the Statewide Enrollment and Reporting System.

*Agreements in Support of Career and Technical Education Dual Credit.* In 2008 legislation was enacted that directed community and technical colleges (CTCs) to create agreements with high schools and skill centers to offer dual credit for CTE courses. It permits CTCs to create agreements with high schools and skill centers located outside the college district boundary or service area. The legislation also required that, when a CTC has created an agreement with a high school or skill center to offer college credit for a CTE course, all CTCs must accept the course for an equal amount of college credit.

Pilot Program to Increase Career and Technical Education Dual Credit Access and Attainment.

The 2023-25 State Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act provided \$700,000 to the SBCTC to administer a two year pilot program to increase CTE dual credit participation and credential attainment in professional technical programs. The SBCTC, with the OSPI, was required to select up to three CTCs in the same educational service district (ESD) to participate in the pilot program. Allowable uses for the funding are student cost subsidies, outreach, curriculum alignment, and necessary equipment and supplies.

As required, a preliminary report of the pilot program was published in December 2024. The final report is due by December 10, 2025. The SBCTC is required to establish a stakeholder committee that is representative of students, faculty, staff, and agency representatives to inform this work. The report must include recommendations on eight topics, for example: course articulation and identification of priority courses, data

collection and reporting, credit transcription and transfer, student advising, CTE dual credit course alignment with other pathways, funding for industry-recognized credentials, and evaluation of the statewide enrollment and data system.

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### **Summary of Substitute Bill:**

#### Pilot Program to Increase Career and Technical Education Dual Credit Access and Attainment.

To increase career and technical education (CTE) dual credit participation and credential attainment in professional technical programs, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) must administer and award grant funding to up to three regional pilot programs, subject to appropriations.

One pilot program, which may receive funding for up to two years, must be a continuation of the pilot program established in 2023-25 State Omnibus Operating Appropriations Act. The SBCTC, in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), must select participants for the other two pilot programs, which may receive grant funding for up to four years, based on educational service district (ESD) regions. These pilot programs must be geographically dispersed, with at least one in an ESD with rural communities that lack convenient student access to skill centers or other workforce development facilities or programs.

Pilot program participants may use grant funding to cover expenses for specified activities, for example:

- developing a catalog of dual credit courses offered in each high school;
- aligning CTE dual credit programs with postsecondary credential pathways and apprenticeships leading to in-demand career fields;
- providing specified technical assistance and professional development to staff of the high schools and institutions of higher education; and
- supporting high school staff with outreach to eligible CTE dual credit students on how to receive and apply for postsecondary credit, and by awarding grants for CTE dual credit courses that meet emerging needs in high-demand, high-paying industries.

#### Plan and Report on Improving the Career and Technical Education Dual Credit Data System.

The SBCTC is required to develop a plan for improving or replacing its online, statewide enrollment and reporting system for CTE dual credit. The SBCTC must hire a consultant to conduct a comprehensive, written assessment of technology solutions with the goal of enhancing secondary and postsecondary CTE dual credit systems to ensure seamless integration and accessibility for users. The objectives and scope of the assessment are specified, for example: gather input from interested parties, develop a detailed timeline, and estimate the total cost to implement the chosen technology.

The SBCTC is required to submit the consultant's assessment and a cover letter outlining its position on the consultant's conclusions to the Legislature by June 30, 2026.

Joint Legislative Report.

The SBCTC, in consultation with the OSPI, must jointly report to the Legislature on the implementation of this bill and with recommendations for additional improvements to state dual credit policies. The preliminary report is due by December 10, 2026, and the final report is due by August 10, 2029.

One or both reports must include the following information: findings regarding the CTE dual credit pilot programs, and recommendations to the Legislature and relevant state agencies on six specified topics.

The final report must establish recommendations to improve state CTE dual credit policies, create statewide articulation agreements, and improve the uniform transcription of earned credits. These recommendations must include input from a statewide organization representing CTE and other relevant interested parties and report on potential statutory and rule changes that support equitable student access to, and the effectiveness of, CTE dual credit programs.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

As compared to the original bill, the substitute bill:

- strikes language directing the educational service districts (ESDs) to collaborate with specified entities to streamline regional efforts that support students' dual credit access and attainment by conducting nine activities, subject to appropriations;
- requires the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to administer and award grant funding to up to three regional pilot programs for the purpose of increasing career and technical education (CTE) dual credit participation and credential attainment in professional technical programs, subject to appropriations;
- revises requirements for the SBCTC to develop a plan for improving its online CTE dual credit administrative data system to, among other things, include hiring a consultant to conduct a comprehensive, written assessment of technology solutions;
- strikes language requiring the SBCTC, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to create and publish statewide articulation agreements for the five most common CTE dual credit courses; and
- modifies requirements for the joint reports on the implementation of the bill to, among other things, remove the involvement of the Association of ESDs, delay the report due dates, and require input from a statewide organization representing CTE and other relevant interested parties on the recommendations for the final report.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Preliminary fiscal note available. New fiscal note requested on February 17, 2025.

**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) Taking dual credit courses is an incentive to students because it exposes them to higher education and gives them a head start towards a postsecondary credential. There is a high school graduation requirement that students take a CTE course. The CTE directors are doing incredible work building courses, finding articulation opportunities, and making sure students have the tools they need to succeed.

In 2023 over 56,000 students were enrolled in CTE dual credit courses, not including Running Start students. CTE dual credit is one of the most accessible forms of dual credit; it attracts a more diverse and socioeconomically representative population than other dual credit programs. In the class of 2023, 52 percent of students completed the CTE graduation pathway.

Unlike traditional courses, CTE dual credit courses require intensive negotiations, creation of articulations and learning outcomes, manual transcription, and specialized advising materials. Over the past five years, there have been at least three major research reports that have concluded that the CTE dual credit data systems, ctcLink and SERS, need to be updated.

Students must go through at least two more steps to receive postsecondary credit than for other programs. Some students, especially those in rural and remote districts, are unaware that the CTE courses they are taking have college credits available. Only about 3 percent of CTE dual credit courses in high school are transcribed into a credit bearing credential. This results in many students missing the opportunity to save money and accelerate their postsecondary degrees.

The pilot program unites four community colleges with regional high school CTE directors to expand opportunities for students and ensure that credits apply meaningfully towards postsecondary credentials. Key successes from the pilot program include a shared vision for CTE dual credit aligned with workforce needs, standardized processes to reduce administrative complexity for school districts, and the launch of community of practice for computer science educators to improve alignment and expand dual credit articulations.

In this budget environment, the bill will not make it without being scaled back. Community and technical colleges and kindergarten through grade 12 educators can work together directly on CTE dual credit articulation agreements so that students can transfer credits directly to community colleges or apprenticeship programs. That work can continue

regionally, while the state looks at creating statewide articulation agreements.

The bill reflects workgroup recommendations by dedicating staff to CTE dual credit, providing centralized tools to streamline processes and improve data management, and the creation of a statewide policy to enhance credit transferability and program equity. The bill will require greater coordination between ESDs, CTCs, and high schools. It will ensure that students have a clear, accessible pathway to earning and applying their credits towards meaningful degrees and career credentials.

(Opposed) None.

(Other) Much of what is being attempted in this bill has been tried before. The system needs to have the ability, resources and incentive to create articulation agreements, transcribe credits, and then allow students apply the credits. The policies for transcribing CTE dual credit are not uniform; some colleges require students to apply for CTE dual credit within a week of high school graduation.

The SBCTC has been working with the OSPI and others to suggest amendments to the bill that recognize the budget constraints and allow the work to continue at the regional level. The SBCTC should take the lead on the work in partnership with the ESDs. There should be an expansion of the pilot program to replicate work that is already been done over the past two years. A technology consultant should help with the technology part of the bill.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Dave Paul, prime sponsor; Jayme Shoun, Washington STEM; Vickei Hrdina; Sienna Jarrard, Associated Students of the University of Washington Bothell; Heba Qatrani, Washington Student Association; John Axtell; and Jenny Veltri, Career Connect Northwest Education Service District 189.

(Other) William Belden, Washington SBCTC; and Tim Knue, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education.

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

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

**Majority Report:** The second substitute bill be substituted therefor and the second substitute bill do pass and do not pass the substitute bill by Committee on Education. Signed by 29 members: Representatives Ormsby, Chair; Gregerson, Vice Chair; Macri, Vice Chair; Couture, Ranking Minority Member; Connors, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Penner, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Berg, Bergquist, Burnett, Caldier, Callan, Corry, Cortes, Doglio, Dye, Fitzgibbon, Keaton, Leavitt, Manjarrez, Marshall, Peterson, Pollet, Rude, Ryu, Springer, Stonier, Street, Thai and Tharinger.

**Staff:** Kate Henry (786-7349).

## **Summary of Recommendation of Committee On Appropriations Compared to Recommendation of Committee On Education:**

As compared to the substitute bill, the second substitute bill:

- revises the number of pilot programs from three to one;
- removes the requirement that the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges develop a plan to improve or replace the statewide enrollment reporting system;
- changes the date of the final report from August 10, 2029, to August 10, 2027; and
- adds a null and void clause.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Second Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed. However, the bill is null and void unless funded in the budget.

### **Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) The career and technical education (CTE) dual credit is one of the most accessible forms of dual credit. In 2023 over 56,000 students were enrolled in CTE dual credit courses. The CTE dual credit programs give students the opportunity to start earning college credits while in high school. Dual credit classes not only save students money, but allow students to adjust to the pace and rigor of university classes.

Some students receive outdated CTE course lists, some of which do not transfer to public four-year institutions. Students need accessible up-to-date programs to ensure their success. The bill addresses system wide issues of technology systems accessibility, specifically ctcLink and the statewide enrollment reporting system.

In one educational service district the average CTE dual credit completion rate is 20 percent serving rural districts compared to 60 percent statewide completion rate. Rural districts are citing the lack of dedicated staff as a key barrier in provided direct support and CTE courses for students. Regional support to students and staff in CTE pathways aligns with local workforce demand.

Certain CTE programs that do not require unique equipment should be more financially supported throughout the state, specifically serving rural and remote districts. With the increasing amount of student debt, housing prices, and overall cost of living, the cost of education should be the last thing that students worry about. This bill is a direct investment in those who will one day lead our nation.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Sienna Jarrard, Associated Students of the University of Washington Bothell; Tianyi Tong, Lake Washington High School; John Axtell; Jayme Shoun, Washington STEM; and Vickei Hrdina.

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