



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Senate Education Committee approves bill to give Oregon students a running start on college

SB 254 establishes state standards to allow students to earn dual credits

SALEM – The Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee unanimously passed out legislation this afternoon that will give high school students a jump on college credits and expenses by requiring school districts to provide or ensure access to accelerated collage credit programs, also referred to as “dual credit” courses. Dual credit courses are those in which a high school student can earn both college and high school credits.

“If a kid can come out of high school with a years’ worth of college credits, they are effectively saving a years’ tuition off a college education,” said Senator Mark Hass (D-Beaverton), chair of the Committee. “That’s thousands of dollars in savings for an Oregon family.”

Dual credit courses can be offered at both high schools or colleges and universities. This includes Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes in Oregon high schools and programs that allow students to attend local community colleges or universities while still enrolled in high school.

“This is a major piece of higher education reform that will expand access to college, especially for first generation college students and other students who face challenges transitioning to higher education after high school,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “For some students, having a path to college starting in high school can make enrolling and staying in school later on a lot easier.”

Senate Bill 254 is the product of a higher education workgroup that was appointed last summer and led by Hass and Representative Tobias Read (D-Beaverton). It is one of three key recommended legislative proposals from that group. Another, SB 253, puts in statute Oregon’s goal to raise education levels of adults to meet a “40-40-20” standard by the year 2025. That bill passed with bipartisan support in the Senate last week. SB 254 now goes to Ways and Means for consideration.

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