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HOUSE BILL 1472

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State of Washington                      63rd Legislature                      2013 Regular Session

By Representatives Hansen, Habib, Freeman, and Magendanz

Read first time 01/28/13. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to initiatives to improve and expand access to  
2 computer science education; amending RCW 28A.230.097 and 28A.250.030;  
3 adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.**    (1) The legislature finds that:

6            (a) Through such initiatives as grants for high-demand career and  
7 technical education programs and participation in the microsoft IT  
8 academy, the state has previously supported K-12 computer science  
9 education;

10           (b) However, even though there were nearly sixty-five thousand  
11 student enrollments in high school computer science courses in the  
12 2011-12 school year, more than half of those enrollments were in  
13 beginning or exploratory courses. Fewer than twelve hundred students  
14 enrolled in AP computer science courses;

15           (c) National studies of K-12 computer science education indicate  
16 that, in part because computer science is not treated as an academic  
17 subject, students may not perceive advanced computer science as  
18 relevant to their future academic or career success; and

1 (d) Strategies are needed to support additional opportunities for  
2 Washington students to have careers in the innovative, technology-based  
3 industries located in our state.

4 (2) Therefore the legislature intends to take additional steps to  
5 improve and expand access to computer science education, particularly  
6 in advanced courses that could prepare students for careers in the  
7 field.

8 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.097 and 2008 c 170 s 202 are each amended to  
9 read as follows:

10 (1) Each high school or school district board of directors shall  
11 adopt course equivalencies for career and technical high school courses  
12 offered to students in high schools and skill centers. A career and  
13 technical course equivalency may be for whole or partial credit. Each  
14 school district board of directors shall develop a course equivalency  
15 approval procedure. Boards of directors must approve AP computer  
16 science courses as equivalent to high school mathematics, including for  
17 purposes of meeting the third credit of mathematics required for  
18 graduation.

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

34 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630  
35 RCW to read as follows:

36 Subject to funds appropriated specifically for the purpose of this

1 section, the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
2 allocate, on a competitive basis, grants to school districts that  
3 establish partnerships with technology businesses, business  
4 organizations, or other nonprofit organizations to support computer  
5 science professionals from private industry serving on a voluntary  
6 basis as coinstructors along with a certificated teacher for high  
7 school computer science and computer programming courses. In making  
8 grant awards, the office must take steps to assure that the funds are  
9 used to increase the number of courses coconstructed by computer science  
10 professionals and are not used to supplant funding for courses  
11 coconstructed under partnerships established before the effective date  
12 of this section.

13 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** (1) The workforce training and education  
14 coordinating board shall convene and provide staff support for a  
15 computer science professional shortage task force as provided in this  
16 section. The task force must include representatives from technology  
17 businesses and business organizations; state education agencies  
18 including the office of the superintendent of public instruction, the  
19 Washington student achievement council, and the state board for  
20 community and technical colleges; education providers such as school  
21 districts, skill centers, colleges and universities, and technical  
22 schools; and computer science teachers and faculty.

23 (2) The purpose of the task force is to develop a strategic plan  
24 with specific short and longer-term strategies to increase the number  
25 of graduates from high schools, colleges, and universities who are  
26 prepared to enter the workforce or continue their education in computer  
27 science.

28 (3) The task force must consider at least the following issues:

29 (a) The status and potential for improvement of computer science  
30 education at the secondary and postsecondary level, including issues of  
31 capacity and barriers for increased numbers of students to enroll in  
32 advanced courses;

33 (b) Strategies to increase access to and success in computer  
34 science education and careers for disadvantaged students and students  
35 living in rural communities; and

36 (c) Opportunities for collaboration among education providers,

1 public agencies, and businesses at the local, regional, and state  
2 level.

3 (4) The task force must submit a report with recommendations to the  
4 education, higher education, and labor and workforce committees of the  
5 legislature by September 15, 2014.

6 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.250.030 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 34 s 7 are each  
7 amended to read as follows:

8 The superintendent of public instruction shall create an office of  
9 online learning. In the initial establishment of the office, the  
10 superintendent shall hire staff who have been employed by the digital  
11 learning commons to the extent such hiring is in accordance with state  
12 law and to the extent funds are available. The office shall:

13 (1) Develop and maintain a web site that provides objective  
14 information for students, parents, and educators regarding online  
15 learning opportunities offered by online providers that have been  
16 approved in accordance with RCW 28A.250.020. The web site shall  
17 include information regarding the online course provider's overall  
18 instructional program, specific information regarding the content of  
19 individual online courses and online school programs, a direct link to  
20 each online course provider's web site, how to register for online  
21 learning programs and courses, teacher qualifications, student-to-  
22 teacher ratios, course completion rates, and other evaluative and  
23 comparative information. The web site shall also provide information  
24 regarding the process and criteria for approving online providers. To  
25 the greatest extent possible, the superintendent shall use the  
26 framework of the course offering component of the web site developed by  
27 the digital learning commons;

28 (2) Develop model agreements with approved online providers that  
29 address standard contract terms and conditions that may apply to  
30 contracts between a school district and the approved provider. The  
31 purpose of the agreements is to provide a template to assist individual  
32 school districts, at the discretion of the district, in contracting  
33 with online providers to offer the online provider's courses and  
34 programs to students in the district. The agreements may address  
35 billing, fees, responsibilities of online course providers and school  
36 districts, and other issues; (~~and~~)

1       (3) Actively seek additional providers of online computer science  
2 courses, including advanced courses, to be made available through the  
3 office of online learning, and publicize the availability of such  
4 courses to high schools;

5       (4) Actively seek funding from private or federal sources to offset  
6 the costs to school districts and students of offering and enrolling in  
7 online computer science courses made available through the office of  
8 online learning; and

9       (5) In collaboration with the educational service districts:

10       (a) Provide technical assistance and support to school district  
11 personnel through the educational technology centers in the development  
12 and implementation of online learning programs in their districts; and

13       (b) To the extent funds are available, provide online learning  
14 tools for students, teachers, administrators, and other educators.

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