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DATE: April 1, 1999

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION K-12
ANALYSIS**

BILL #: CS/HB 907

RELATING TO: Student Grade Point Averages

SPONSOR(S): Committee on Education K-12 and Representative Johnson

COMPANION BILL(S): SB 336

ORIGINATING COMMITTEE(S)/COMMITTEE(S) OF REFERENCE:

- (1) EDUCATION K-12 YEAS 9 NAYS 0
- (2) COMMUNITY COLLEGES & CAREER PREP
- (3) EDUCATION APPROPRIATIONS
- (4)
- (5)

I. SUMMARY:

The committee substitute (CS) requires that in computing grade point averages, school districts and community colleges weigh rigorous college-level dual enrollment courses the same as honors courses or advanced placement if the courses are deemed to be of equal value. It authorizes school districts and community colleges to designate a course as both dual enrollment and advanced placement and allows students to earn college credit as permitted by either the dual enrollment program or the advanced placement program in a course that is designated as both.

There is no fiscal impact associated with this CS.

II. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS:

A. PRESENT SITUATION:

Section 240.1163, F.S., prescribes requirements regarding joint dual enrollment and advanced placement instruction. School districts, community colleges, and state universities may conduct advanced placement instruction within dual enrollment courses. Each joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course is subject to the provisions of the district inter-institutional articulation agreement which must certify that each joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course integrates, at a minimum, the course structure recommended by the College Board and the structure that corresponds to the common course number.

Each student enrolled in a joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course may be funded pursuant to either the dual enrollment or advanced placement formula; however, no student may be funded through both programs. The district school board reporting enrollments for such courses must utilize the funding formula that more closely approximates the cost of conducting the course. No student can be reported for advanced placement funding who fails to meet the examination requirement for such funding.

Postsecondary credit for student completion of a joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course must be awarded, based on the stated preference of the student, as either dual enrollment or advanced placement credit; however, an award of advanced placement credit is limited to students who score a minimum of 3, on a 5-point scale, on the Advanced Placement Examination. No student can claim double credit based on the completion of a single joint dual enrollment and advanced placement course, nor can any student enrolled pursuant to this section be required to complete the Advanced Placement Examination.

School districts and community colleges must weigh college-level dual enrollment courses the same as honors courses and advanced placement courses when grade point averages are calculated. Alternative grade calculation or weighting systems that discriminate against dual enrollment courses are prohibited.

The Commissioner of Education may approve dual enrollment agreements for limited course offerings that have statewide appeal. Such programs must be limited to a single site with multiple county participation.

Weighting Grades

Florida law encourages "articulated acceleration," or the ability to earn college credit while a student is still in high school. The benefit to the state is that it saves money when students progress faster through postsecondary education. The state provides fiscal incentives for three types of articulated acceleration, and this bill relates to two of them:

- Under dual enrollment, a student takes a course that is designated both as a community college course and a high school course. The course is usually taught at a high school by a teacher under contract with the local community college. *The incentive is that both the community college and the school district report the student to the state for funding.*
- Under the national advanced placement program, high school teachers receive special training and teach a prescribed curriculum that is deemed college-level. Students earn college credit only if they make a designated score on a standardized achievement test specific to the content of the prescribed curriculum. *The incentive is that the school district earns additional state funds for each student who achieves the designated score.*

School districts typically encourage students to take rigorous courses by "weighting" the grades. For instance, a grade of C in a rigorous course might be equivalent to a C+ or a B in a regular course. The weights have differed from district to district and course to course, but generally some weights were added to grades in advanced placement courses, honors courses, and some regular courses that are rigorous, such as calculus.

Some community colleges complained that school districts discriminated against dual enrollment courses by not weighing the grades, so students were less eager to take them than advanced

placement courses or honors courses. The 1998 Legislature amended s. 240.1163, F.S., to require school districts to weigh grades the same for advanced placement courses, honors courses, and dual enrollment courses. Discrimination against dual enrollment courses is forbidden by law. (This prohibition does not cover dual enrollment in vocational-certificate level courses, only in college-level courses.)

School districts assert that some honors courses are not as rigorous as advanced placement courses, and some dual enrollment courses are not as rigorous as either. They do not like the requirement that weights must be the same for all three.

Joint Dual Enrollment and Advanced Placement

Another issue arises because some courses are designated both dual enrollment and advanced placement, and students want to select whichever method of earning college credit benefits them the most. Some high school counselors consider advanced placement credit more prestigious because it is a national program and looks better on a transcript. So students want to take the advanced placement test and, if they fail it, they still want to earn college credit for passing the dual enrollment course.

Some school districts allow this fall-back position, and some don't. In the stricter districts, a student must declare at the beginning of the course whether it is -- for him or her -- an advanced placement course or a dual enrollment course. The advanced placement students take the test and they earn no college credit if they fail it, only high school credit. The dual enrollment students earn college credit if they pass the course, but they are not allowed to take the advanced placement test and their transcripts do not reflect an advanced placement course.

B. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

The CS requires that in computing grade point averages, school districts and community colleges weigh rigorous college-level dual enrollment courses the same as honors courses or advanced placement courses if the courses are deemed to be of equal value. It authorizes school districts and community colleges to designate a course as both dual enrollment and advanced placement and allows students to earn college credit under dual enrollment provisions or under advanced placement provisions. In these courses, students would be allowed to take the advanced placement test, and if they failed it they could still earn college credit under dual enrollment.

C. APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES:

1. Less Government:

a. Does the bill create, increase or reduce, either directly or indirectly:

(1) any authority to make rules or adjudicate disputes?

No.

(2) any new responsibilities, obligations or work for other governmental or private organizations or individuals?

No.

(3) any entitlement to a government service or benefit?

No.

b. If an agency or program is eliminated or reduced:

An agency or program is not eliminated or reduced.

- (1) what responsibilities, costs and powers are passed on to another program, agency, level of government, or private entity?

N/A

- (2) what is the cost of such responsibility at the new level/agency?

N/A

- (3) how is the new agency accountable to the people governed?

N/A

2. Lower Taxes:

- a. Does the bill increase anyone's taxes?

No.

- b. Does the bill require or authorize an increase in any fees?

No.

- c. Does the bill reduce total taxes, both rates and revenues?

No.

- d. Does the bill reduce total fees, both rates and revenues?

No.

- e. Does the bill authorize any fee or tax increase by any local government?

No.

3. Personal Responsibility:

- a. Does the bill reduce or eliminate an entitlement to government services or subsidy?

No.

- b. Do the beneficiaries of the legislation directly pay any portion of the cost of implementation and operation?

No.

4. Individual Freedom:

- a. Does the bill increase the allowable options of individuals or private organizations/associations to conduct their own affairs?

No.

- b. Does the bill prohibit, or create new government interference with, any presently lawful activity?

No.

5. Family Empowerment:

- a. If the bill purports to provide services to families or children:

The bill does not purport to provide services to families or children.

- (1) Who evaluates the family's needs?

N/A

- (2) Who makes the decisions?

N/A

- (3) Are private alternatives permitted?

N/A

- (4) Are families required to participate in a program?

N/A

- (5) Are families penalized for not participating in a program?

N/A

- b. Does the bill directly affect the legal rights and obligations between family members?

No.

- c. If the bill creates or changes a program providing services to families or children, in which of the following does the bill vest control of the program, either through direct participation or appointment authority:

The bill does not create or change a program providing services to families or children.

- (1) parents and guardians?

N/A

- (2) service providers?

N/A

- (3) government employees/agencies?

N/A

D. STATUTE(S) AFFECTED:

The CS amends s. 240.1163, F.S.

E. SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS:

Section 1 amends s. 240.1163, F.S., to require that in computing grade point averages, school districts and community colleges weigh rigorous college-level dual enrollment courses the same as honors courses or advanced placement courses if the courses are deemed to be of equal value. It allows community colleges and school districts to designate sufficiently rigorous courses as both dual enrollment and advanced placement and allows students to earn college credit under dual enrollment provisions or under advanced placement provisions in courses that are designated as both.

Section 2 specifies an effective date of July 1, 1999.

III. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT:

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE AGENCIES/STATE FUNDS:

1. Non-recurring Effects:

None.

2. Recurring Effects:

None.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

4. Total Revenues and Expenditures:

None.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AS A WHOLE:

1. Non-recurring Effects:

None.

2. Recurring Effects:

None.

3. Long Run Effects Other Than Normal Growth:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

1. Direct Private Sector Costs:

None.

2. Direct Private Sector Benefits:

None.

3. Effects on Competition, Private Enterprise and Employment Markets:

None.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

IV. CONSEQUENCES OF ARTICLE VII, SECTION 18 OF THE FLORIDA CONSTITUTION:

A. **APPLICABILITY OF THE MANDATES PROVISION:**

The bill does not require counties or municipalities to spend funds or take an action requiring the expenditure of funds.

B. **REDUCTION OF REVENUE RAISING AUTHORITY:**

The bill does not reduce the authority that counties or municipalities have to raise revenues in the aggregate.

C. **REDUCTION OF STATE TAX SHARED WITH COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES:**

The bill does not reduce the percentage of a state tax shared with counties or municipalities.

V. **COMMENTS:**

None.

VI. **AMENDMENTS OR COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES:**

The CS differs from the bill in that it amends a specific section of statutes rather than creating a new one that would be in conflict. It requires school districts and community colleges to weigh a college-level dual enrollment course as either an advanced placement or as an honors course if the course is deemed to be sufficiently rigorous. It allows school districts and community colleges to designate a course as both dual enrollment and as advanced placement and allows students to earn college credit under either dual enrollment provisions or under advanced placement provisions in courses that are designated as both.

VII. **SIGNATURES:**

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION K-12:

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