

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based only on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SB's 1470 and 2424

SPONSOR: Senator Kirkpatrick

SUBJECT: Dual Enrollment

DATE: April 10, 2000 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	O'Farrell	O'Farrell	ED	Favorable/CS
2.			FP	
3.				
4.				
5.				

I. Summary:

The bill amends several sections of law that create and provide for the dual enrollment program to allow high school students to enroll in community college and university courses that, if successfully completed, may be used for both college credit and high school graduation purposes. The revisions address a number of aspects of the dual enrollment program, including: criteria for determining high school student eligibility for the program, a process for involving the Articulation Coordinating Committee in establishing postsecondary and high school course equivalency, a method of funding high schools and postsecondary institutions for dually enrolled students, a procedure for establishing local school district dual enrollment agreements, and a process for providing counseling services to students to make the most of their dual enrollment experience.

This bill amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 229.551, 232.246, 232.2462, 236.081, 240.116, and 240.1161.

II. Present Situation:

Dual enrollment is one of the articulated acceleration options made available to high school students by s. 240.116, F.S. The law expresses the intent for these options to provide students with opportunities to shorten the time to degree completion, broaden the scope of available curriculum offerings, or increase the depth of study available in a particular subject. Dual enrollment allows students to enroll in community college or university courses and simultaneously earn postsecondary credit and satisfy high school graduation requirements. According to the Department of Education's most recent count (1998-99), dual enrollment participation exceeded 29,000 students or about 10 percent of the public schools' 11th and 12th grade population. More than 27,000 of the students were enrolled in community college courses, almost 2,000 were in postsecondary adult/vocational classes, and slightly more than 300 students took courses at state universities.

Students permitted to enroll in dual enrollment courses may take them during the school day, after regular school hours, or during the summer. Public and nonpublic high school students and home schooled students may participate in dual enrollment classes if they have passed a common college placement test to demonstrate readiness and have a 3.0 unweighted grade point average. Students enrolling in vocational certificate programs must have a 2.0 grade point average. Students participating in early admission, a variation of dual enrollment in which they attend a postsecondary institution on a full-time basis, must have completed six semesters as full-time secondary students to be eligible for the program.

School superintendents and community college presidents share the responsibility for the development and implementation of an articulation agreement for dual enrollment. Universities are also authorized to participate in the process. The agreements must include: information regarding eligible dual enrollment courses and quality criteria, student eligibility criteria, cost for instructional materials, transportation, and the conversion of college credit hours to high school credit. However, current law requires 6 college credit hours to equal one high school credit. The Department of Education is required to approve any course in the common course numbering and designation system for inclusion in the dual enrollment program. College-preparatory instruction, physical education, and courses that focus on physical rather than academic skills must be approved on an individual course basis to be included in the dual enrollment program.

Dual enrollment students are exempt from paying postsecondary registration, matriculation, and laboratory fees. Public school students are also exempt from paying for instructional materials required for dual enrollment courses. School districts may report dual enrollment students for FTE funding purposes. Community colleges now generate funding for degree completers under a performance-based funding system, and dual enrollment students do not earn a degree so community colleges cannot generate performance funding. On the other hand, the colleges experienced no reduction in revenue due to the loss of dual enrollment FTEs when they switched from an enrollment-based to a performance-based funding system. At the present time there is no particular financial incentive for school districts or postsecondary institutions to encourage students to participate in dual enrollment programs.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

The legislation under consideration proposes several changes in current law for the purpose of streamlining the dual enrollment program and enhancing its use as an academic acceleration program for high school students. The Articulation Coordinating Committee is directed to appoint faculty committees representing public schools, community colleges, and state universities to:

- Identify postsecondary courses that satisfy requirements for high school graduation .
- Establish the number of postsecondary semester credit hours of instruction and equivalent high school credits earned through dual enrollment necessary to meet high school graduation requirements.

Based on the findings of the faculty committees, the Articulation Coordinating Committee will recommend to the State Board of Education the courses identified as meeting high school graduation requirements, by their common course code numbers, and all high schools must accept the courses as meeting the statutory requirements for high school graduation. The committee will also determine the number of postsecondary credit hours earned through dual enrollment that equal one full credit in the equivalent high school course. The amount of instruction time for a full

high school credit is changed from 150 to 135 hours. Equivalencies, however, must be based on course content and not time in class. In addition, if a school district increases academic credit or grade point average requirements for graduation, the increases won't apply to a student earning credit toward graduation through dual enrollment courses.

The bill addresses the following dual enrollment funding issues:

- Students participating in dual enrollment are to be exempt from paying registration, matriculation, and laboratory fees. Postsecondary institutions accepting dual enrollment students are to be reimbursed for their tuition as provided in the annual General Appropriations Act.
- Postsecondary institutions that earn Florida Education Finance Program funds as a charter school are not eligible for the tuition reimbursements.
- Students may enroll in dual enrollment courses offered during school hours, after school hours and in the summer. The instructional time for such courses may exceed 900 hours; however, the school district may only report the student for a maximum of one FTE for Florida Education Funding Program (FEFP) purposes.

School superintendents and community college presidents will be required to jointly develop and implement the articulated acceleration program for dual enrollment students that includes an annual interinstitutional articulation agreement. The following items are additions to the current statutorily required contents of the agreements:

- A plan for community colleges to provide counseling services to students, using the automated advising system, to maximize the benefits of their dual enrollment experience.
- A listing of the courses available to students eligible to participate in dual enrollment.
- A description of the process to be used to inform students and their families of the opportunities to participate in articulated acceleration programs.
- A description of the student enrollment process for articulated acceleration program options.
- A description of the high school credit earned for each dual enrollment course completed.
- Provision for postsecondary courses that meet the criteria for inclusion in a district articulated acceleration program to be counted toward meeting high school graduation requirements.
- Additional admissions criteria the community college board of trustees may have adopted to ensure student readiness for postsecondary education. The additional requirements may not prohibit program participation for any student who has demonstrated the ability to be successful in dual enrollment courses.

School districts may not refuse to enter into an agreement with a community college if the college has the capacity to offer dual enrollment courses.

In addition to its new responsibility of determining equivalency between postsecondary credit hours of instruction and high school course credits, the Articulation Coordinating Committee must also review each interinstitutional articulation agreement to certify the common course code number of postsecondary courses that meet each school district's high school graduation requirements. Also, the committee, rather than the Department of Education, will have the responsibility for approving courses for inclusion in the dual enrollment program. The department is charged with the responsibility of providing the Articulation Coordinating Committee with the staff and resources necessary to carry out its new duties.

Each school district will be required to inform secondary school students about the opportunities for dual enrollment. The information must inform students about the eligibility requirements for dual enrollment, the option for taking courses beyond the regular school year, and the 24 minimum academic credits required for high school graduation.

The district must assess demand for dual enrollment and other advanced courses and develop strategies for meeting such demands.

The Articulation Coordinating Committee will provide students, through the district superintendent, with a statement of dual enrollment options and transfer guarantees.

The early admission program which allows eligible high school students to enroll in postsecondary courses on a full-time basis will no longer be limited to students who have completed six semesters of high school enrollment.

Home education students are eligible to participate in dual enrollment. The bill authorizes these students to apply credits earned through dual enrollment toward completion of their home education programs.

The State Board of Education is authorized to adopt such rules as may be necessary to implement the provisions of the bill.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. Other Constitutional Issues:

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Students participating in dual enrollment programs benefit economically by being able to earn credit toward a postsecondary degree at no cost to themselves or their families. The benefit per student will depend on the number of dual enrollment courses completed by each individual.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The Department of Education has estimated the cost of reimbursing postsecondary institutions for the tuition of dually enrolled students to be \$9.2 million for the first year. The figure was derived by estimating the cost of community college reimbursement at \$8 million, and state university reimbursement at \$1.2 million. The department has also estimated that the total cost will increase by an inflationary factor of 3 percent for each of the two subsequent years.

Community college counseling services will add an unknown amount to the workload costs of a dual enrollment program.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.