

Notifying High School Students and Families about Dual Credit Programs and Financial Aid

Guidance about the implementation of Substitute House Bill 1146 (2024)

Released October 2024

Background

Multiple studies and reports have highlighted gaps in dual credit participation among students experiencing poverty, students with disabilities, English language learners, and students from underrepresented ethnic groups. [Substitute House Bill \(SHB\) 1146](#) aims to ensure that all students and families are provided with timely, accurate, comprehensive and understandable information about each dual credit program available in each school and any financial assistance associated with them. This must be provided in an annual notice to students and families.

What needs to be communicated?

The annual notice must include a description of each dual credit program available in each high school. This should include, at a minimum, the program name and its distinguishing characteristics and eligibility criteria as outlined in statute. Descriptions should be objective, should not imply a school or district preference for one program over another, and should not recommend participation of a particular type of student.

In addition to program descriptions, the notice must include information about financial assistance available, and any explicit eligibility criteria, to reduce or eliminate out-of-pocket costs to students enrolled in dual credit programs. This should include, at a minimum, information on:

- Running Start fee waivers at colleges ([RCW 28A.600.310](#)),
- Exam fee subsidies (see OSPI's Test Fee Subsidy document)
- The opportunity to take state-funded College in the High School courses free of cost at Washington's public colleges and universities and Heritage University,
- Assistance available through OSPI's [Consolidated Equity and Sustainability Grant](#), and
- Opportunities to receive funding through the Washington Student Achievement Council's (WSAC) [Dual Enrollment Scholarship](#) at participating colleges.

How and by whom does the notice need to be provided?

The annual notification of dual credit options and available financial assistance must be provided by each public school serving students in grades 9–12. It must be provided by email and through other methods, and may be incorporated into other required communications



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related to academic acceleration policies ([RCW 28A.320.195](#)), College in the High School ([RCW 28A.600.287](#)), and Running Start ([RCW 28A.600.320](#)). Districts must also ensure that students in grade 8 who are entering a high school that offers College in the High School (CiHS) and/or CTE Dual Credit, and their parents and guardians, are made aware of those options prior to registering for freshman year courses.

The notice must be translated into the primary language(s) of parents or legal guardians to the extent feasible and should be delivered in a manner accessible to individuals with disabilities. It is highly recommended that dual credit and financial assistance options be promoted on high school and/or district webpages and in course catalogs, student/family handbooks, and in High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) lesson plans in addition to being provided by email.

When and how often?

Notice must be provided prior to course scheduling for the next school term. At a minimum, this means the communication should be sent annually in the winter to inform students of these options prior to or as part of the spring registration process for the following fall term.

To whom?

The notification must be sent to students in grades 9–12 and their parents and/or legal guardians. To the extent feasible, it should be translated into the primary language of each parent and/or legal guardian. If used to satisfy other notification requirements referenced above (academic acceleration and CiHS, in particular), it is advisable to provide notification to students as early as 8th grade so they are aware of their options prior to registering for freshman year courses.

What else should be communicated to students and families?

SHB 1146 references other notification requirements associated with academic acceleration, CiHS, and Running Start. To ensure the consistency and timeliness of their messaging, schools are encouraged to include the following at least annually:

- Notification of the district's academic acceleration policy and the opportunity to opt out in favor of choosing more relevant courses aligned with the students' postsecondary education or training goals as documented in their HSBP (RCW 28A.320.195).
- General information about the CiHS program (if offered), which must include the following information:
 - There is no fee to enroll for college credit at Washington's public colleges and universities and Heritage University
 - Enrollment for college credit starts a college transcript at the IHE offering the course regardless of the student's performance and
 - College credit may count as elective credit if transferred to another IHE (RCW 28A.600.287).

- Families can utilize the [CiHS Course Equivalencies tool](#) posted on the [Council of Presidents' Dual Credit webpage](#) to explore how a specific college credit will transfer into the four-year public universities.
 - An explanation of how CiHS courses are identified within the annual course catalog to ensure student and family awareness of available courses.
- General information about the Running Start program, which must include the following information:
 - Eligible students may enroll in Running Start at any Washington community and technical college and participating state colleges and universities (Central and Eastern Washington Universities, Washington State University, Tri-Cities, and the Northwest Indian College)
 - Eligible students may enroll in online college courses at participating IHEs
 - Summer term opportunities are available for eligible students (including rising juniors) with available annual average FTE (AAFTE) (see [Bulletin 027-24](#))
 - High school diplomas may be issued by colleges to high school seniors under the conditions set forth in [RCW 28B.50.535](#) and
 - Students are responsible for applying for admission to the IHE in which they intend to enroll ([RCW 28A.600.320](#)).

If provided to students as early as the 8th grade (as required in [RCW 28A.600.287](#) for CiHS), an annual notification incorporating all of the information above will satisfy the requirements of SHB 1146 and notification requirements for all other dual credit statutes.

Information and Assistance

For general questions regarding all dual credit programs at the secondary level, please contact Tim McClain, OSPI Dual Credit Program Supervisor, at 201-341-2955 or email tim.mcclain@k12.wa.us.

For fiscal and enrollment reporting questions, contact Becky McLean, OSPI Enrollment Reporting Program Manager, at 360-725-6306 or email becky.mclean@k12.wa.us.

For CEDARS questions, contact Student Information using the AskSI@k12.wa.us email inbox. The OSPI TTY number is 360-664-3631.

To receive email updates on dual credit and related topics, sign up for OSPI's Dual Credit Updates GovDelivery listserv by visiting the [OSPI website](#) and selecting "Dual Credit Updates" under the "General Topics" drop-down menu.