

ACT 113

S.B. NO. 374

A Bill for an Act Relating to Dual Credit Programs.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. The Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce has projected that, by 2020, seventy per cent of jobs in Hawaii will require that employees have some level of postsecondary education. However, according to the United States Census Bureau, currently, just forty-two per cent of Hawaii's adults hold a two- or four-year college degree. Several national and local studies have shown the effectiveness of dual credit programs (programs in which students earn both high school and college credit simultaneously) on students' rates of going to college, staying in college, and graduating from college with a postsecondary degree or certificate.

A study recently conducted by Hawaii P-20 partnerships for education on current dual credit programs, such as running start, show similar gains for students taking college-level courses while still in high school despite the high financial cost to students and their families. Nationally, of the forty-seven states, and the District of Columbia, that have statewide policies governing at least one dual credit program, Hawaii is one of only nine states that requires the student and the student's parent or guardian to pay for participation in a dual credit program.

Increasing numbers of students in Hawaii are taking dual credit courses through programs that include, but are not limited to, the running start, jump start, or early college high school programs. However, for more students to gain more credits and the opportunity to earn both a college associate's degree and a high school diploma, they need to be able to start in ninth grade, if they are academically prepared. In more than twenty-eight other states, college-ready high school students can begin taking dual credit courses in the ninth grade.

Finally, there is a growing trend for assessing students' ability for college-readiness, not by a single standardized test, but by multiple measurements, such as grades, overall grade point average, teacher recommendations, and various assessments and tests.

The purposes of this Act are to: broaden current law to include all dual credit programs, broaden eligibility to participate in the program, and allow for multiple measures of assessment to determine eligibility.

SECTION 2. Section 302A-401, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“§302A-401 ~~[Running start]~~ **Dual credit program.** (a) There is created in the department the ~~[running start]~~ **dual credit** program to permit eligible students to enroll in any qualified course offered by the University of Hawaii system.

(b) For the purposes of this section:

“Eligible student” means a public high school student in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade who:

- (1) Has passed ~~[a standardized test administered]~~ an assessment approved by the college that demonstrates the student's ability to succeed at the college level;
- (2) Is under the age of twenty-one as of September 1 of the school year in which the college course is taken; and
- (3) Has other qualifications deemed appropriate by the department of education or the University of Hawaii; provided that subsequent

qualifications do not restrict any student from taking the ~~[standardized test.] assessment.~~

“Qualified course” means any vocational or academic course offered by the University of Hawaii system that also applies to the department’s graduation requirements or is otherwise permitted by department rule or policy.

(c) All course credits successfully completed pursuant to this section that would otherwise be transferable but for a student’s grade level, shall be transferable to any University of Hawaii system degree granting institution; provided that the student is admitted to the campus where the credit is transferred.

(d) ~~[College courses]~~ One hundred level or above University of Hawaii courses that fulfill an undergraduate or graduate degree course requirement and that are successfully completed under this section shall also satisfy the department’s graduation requirements as determined by the department pursuant to rule.

(e) This section shall not preclude the department and the University of Hawaii from establishing programs by mutual agreement that permit high school students to enroll in college courses.

~~[(f) Every student enrolled in a college course pursuant to this section shall remit appropriate tuition and fees to the college for every college course.~~

~~(g) The department shall provide students who participate in the running start program with guidance in earning credit toward high school graduation upon the satisfactory completion of University of Hawaii courses at the one hundred level and above [pursuant to this section].”~~

SECTION 3. Section 304A-803, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

~~“[§304A-803] Running start~~ **Dual credit program.** (a) There is established within the department of education the ~~[running start] dual credit~~ program, to allow eligible students to enroll in any qualified course offered by the University of Hawaii system.

(b) For the purposes of this section:

“Eligible student” means a public or home-schooled high school student in the ninth, tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade who:

- (1) Has passed ~~[a standardized test administered]~~ an assessment approved by the college that demonstrates the student’s ability to succeed at the college level;
- (2) Is under the age of twenty-one as of September 1 of the school year in which the college course is taken; and
- (3) Has other qualifications deemed appropriate by the department of education or the university; provided that subsequent qualifications do not restrict any student from taking the ~~[standardized test.] assessment.~~

“Qualified course” means any career and technical education or academic course offered by the University of Hawaii system that also applies to the department of education’s graduation requirements or is otherwise permitted by department of education rule or policy.

(c) All course credits successfully completed pursuant to this section that would otherwise be transferable but for a student’s grade level, shall be transferable to any University of Hawaii system degree granting institution; provided that the student is admitted to the campus where the credit is transferred.

(d) ~~[College courses]~~ One hundred level or above University of Hawaii courses that fulfill an undergraduate or graduate degree course requirement and that are successfully completed under this section shall also satisfy the depart-

ment of education's graduation requirements as determined by the department of education pursuant to rule.

(e) This section shall not preclude the department of education and the university from establishing programs by mutual agreement that permit high school students to enroll in college courses.

~~[(f) Every student enrolled in a college course pursuant to this section shall remit appropriate tuition and fees to the university.]”~~

SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved June 12, 2015.)