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Klein
3/23/21

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 32(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered:
Referred:

Sponsor(s): SENATORS STEVENS, Micciche, Gray-Jackson

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

"An Act establishing the Alaska middle college program for public school students;
relating to the powers of the University of Alaska; and providing for an effective date."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

* **Section 1.** AS 14.07.168 is amended to read:

Sec. 14.07.168. Report to the legislature. Not later than the 30th legislative day of each regular session of the legislature, the board shall prepare and present in person to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over education an annual report that describes the efforts of the board to develop, maintain, and continuously improve a comprehensive quality public education system, as provided for under the bylaws of the board. The report must include

(1) a summary of the resolves and rationales provided in support of policy decisions made under AS 14.03.015;

(2) program and curriculum changes made, discussed, or recommended in meetings held under AS 14.07.125;

(3) additional information relevant to efforts made to improve and maintain the public education system;

(4) a summary of the Alaska middle college program established in AS 14.30.780; the summary must include the

(A) number of students participating in the program;

(B) types of courses in which students have enrolled;

(C) total number of credits that students have earned;

(D) rate of subsequent enrollment in postsecondary institutions by students who participated in the program; and

(E) postsecondary remediation rates of students who participated in the program for courses taken through the program.

* Sec. 2. AS 14.30 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Article 15. Alaska Middle College Program.

Sec. 14.30.780. Alaska middle college program established. (a) The Alaska middle college program is established for eligible students to enroll in courses offered by the University of Alaska. A student shall earn both high school and college credit for each course the student has satisfactorily completed through the program. College credit earned through the program is fully transferable within and applicable toward pursuit of a degree or certificate at the University of Alaska system.

(b) The University of Alaska shall make the program available to each school district in the state. A school district may elect to participate by entering into an agreement with the University of Alaska. An agreement under this subsection must allow a student eligible under (c) of this section to participate in the program.

(c) A student is eligible for the program if the student

(1) is enrolled in a public school in the state;

(2) has completed the eighth grade and has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the school district and the University of Alaska, the academic ability necessary to complete college level coursework;

(3) has not been awarded a high school diploma; and

(4) to maintain eligibility for the program, complies with the requirements of the program.

(d) Every school district shall provide information about the program to students and parents of students in grades eight through 12 who are enrolled in a public school in the state to ensure that students and parents are aware of program opportunities. The information provided must include the

(1) process that the University of Alaska uses in awarding credit for completing a course through the program, including the minimum scores generally required to receive college credit from a state postsecondary institution;

(2) availability of program courses offered online and throughout the school district;

(3) benefits of earning college credit while enrolled in high school;

(4) availability of academic support services;

(5) academic and social responsibilities associated with participating in the program; and

(6) consequences of failing or not completing a course taken through the program, including whether a failed course will appear on a student's official college transcript.

(e) An agreement entered into by a school district and the University of Alaska under (b) of this section must outline the manner in which costs associated with the program will be shared between the participating school district and the University of Alaska. The agreement may provide for scholarship opportunities and fee waivers to reduce the cost to the school district of participating in the program.

(f) If a program course is offered and conducted at a location other than a University of Alaska facility,

(1) the content and curriculum of the course must be consistent with national standards for awarding dual credit and the standards and learning outcomes of the equivalent course offered at the University of Alaska;

(2) the instructor teaching the course must meet the University of Alaska's standards for adjunct faculty members;

(3) the instructor shall use the same textbooks and instructional materials used for the equivalent course offered at the University of Alaska; and

(4) the course and the instructor are subject to regular evaluation by the

University of Alaska to ensure compliance with these standards.

(g) A student who enrolls in the program shall be permitted to enroll in up to 15 credits each semester and earn up to 60 total credits.

(h) For the purpose of calculating a school district's ADM under AS 14.17.410, a student participating in the program is considered a full-time student of the school district in which the student is enrolled.

(i) The University of Alaska and a school district may release to each other the transcript of a student to determine the student's eligibility for the program or for graduation.

(j) In this section,

(1) "program" means the Alaska middle college program established under this section;

(2) "school district" has the meaning given in AS 14.30.350.

*** Sec. 3.** AS 14.40.040 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(c) The University of Alaska shall implement the Alaska middle college program established under AS 14.30.780. The University of Alaska shall

(1) evaluate and regularly review each course offered in the Alaska middle college program under AS 14.30.780(f) to ensure consistency with national standards for awarding dual credit;

(2) enter into an agreement with a school district that elects to participate consistent with the Alaska middle college program standards; and

(3) award to a student college credit that is fully transferable within and applicable toward pursuit of a degree or certificate at the University of Alaska system for each course satisfactorily completed under the Alaska middle college program.

*** Sec. 4.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2022.