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POSTSECONDARY ENROLLMENT OPTIONS ACT

House Bills 4640-4644

Sponsor: Rep. Jessie Dalman

Committee: Higher Education

Complete to 4-21-95

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4640-4644 AS INTRODUCED 3-21-95

The bills would modify and expand on current provisions in the State School Aid Act providing for the participation of high school students in dual enrollment (in high school and college-level courses) or postsecondary enrollment options and the college level equivalent or advanced placement program. The bills are tie-barred to each other.

College Level Equivalent Courses.

House Bill 4640 would amend the School Code (MCL 380.3 et al.) to provide students with access to high school courses that are taught at a postsecondary instruction level. The bill would add a new Part 14A to the code to establish "college level equivalent courses and credits," effective July 1, 1995. The bill would also establish a College Level Equivalent Incentive Fund; an incentive award program to recognize pupils, teachers, and schools that successfully achieved educational goals by implementing college level equivalent courses; and would require that funds appropriated for professional development and education be allocated to train teachers for college level equivalent courses. The Department of Education could promulgate rules to implement the provisions of Part 14A. The provisions of Part 14A would be repealed effective June 30, 2001. In addition, current provisions under the act establishing a Michigan information network would be replaced with provisions specifying that the network also be used to promote delivery of college level equivalent courses.

College Level Equivalent Courses (CLECs). A CLEC would be defined under the bill to mean a course offered in high school, for which a pupil receives high school credit, that is taught at a postsecondary instruction level and is designed to prepare a pupil for a college level equivalent credit examination in a particular subject area. The board of each school district or public school academy would be required to:

****Pay pupils' CLEC examination fees from the foundation allowance it received for each pupil under the provisions of the School Aid Act. However, the school would not have to pay the fee more than once for each exam.**

****Ensure that each pupil in Grade 8 or higher was provided with both general information about CLECs, and with specific information about appropriate courses for that pupil.**

House Bills 4640-4644 (4-21-95)

**** Provide CLECs either directly, through an intermediate school district program, or by agreement in a consortium or cooperative program.**

CLEC Directory. The state board would be required to publish a CLEC directory annually, and to distribute it to school districts and public school academies, and, upon request, to nonpublic high schools. The directory would list postsecondary Michigan institutions that granted college level equivalent credit, describe each institution's college level equivalent credit policy, detail the specific courses and number of credits for which college level equivalent credit could be granted, and the exam and scores that would be required to qualify for college level equivalent credit for each course. The state board would not include information about a particular postsecondary institution in the directory unless the information were reviewed before publication and its accuracy verified in writing.

Incentive Awards. Beginning in 1996, each school district, public school academy, intermediate school district, consortium, or cooperative program could apply for an incentive award to recognize and reward pupils, teachers, and schools that demonstrated success in achieving the state's educational goals through successful implementation of college level equivalent courses. The deadline for applications would be July 15th. Payments would be disbursed, as directed by the department, from the proposed College Level Equivalent Incentive Fund, and from appropriations to the fund stipulated under the provisions of House Bill 4641. Under House Bill 4640, the following provisions would apply to the program:

****Incentive awards of \$50 each would be paid for each score on a CLEC exam that was at, or above, the minimum score recommended by the Testing Service for College Credit. The award would be paid to the teacher of the CLEC course, and to the high school building or program, or public school academy in which the pupil was enrolled, for each score achieved during the preceding 12-month period.**

****An incentive award payment made to a high school building in a school district would be used for academic purposes only, and priority would be given to uses that would enhance instruction in the academic core curriculum. Input from the team created to develop the school improvement plan for the high school would be obtained before a decision was made on how to use the money.**

****If the appropriation stipulated under the provisions of House Bill 4641 was insufficient to fully fund all incentive award payments, then payment amounts would be prorated accordingly. If the appropriation exceeded the amount needed to fully fund all award payments, then the excess would be deposited in the College Level Equivalent Incentive Fund.**

College Level Equivalent Incentive Fund. The fund would be administered by the department, and used to fund college level equivalent incentive awards. Money in the fund at the end of each state fiscal year would be carried over to the next state fiscal year and would not lapse to the general fund.

Accreditation. The bill would add to current accreditation requirements to specify that, beginning in the 1996-97 school year, a high school's annual educational report would have to include the following:

a) The number and percentage of pupils enrolled in one or more postsecondary courses, under the provisions of the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, during the immediately preceding school year.

b) The number of college level equivalent courses offered to pupils enrolled in the school, in the school district, and in consortia or cooperative programs available to pupils of the school district.

c) The number and percentage of pupils enrolled in at least one college level equivalent course during the immediately preceding school year, desegregated by grade level; and the number and percentage of these pupils who took a CLEC exam, and, of these, the number and percentage who achieved a score on a CLEC exam at or above the level recommended by the Testing Service for College Credit.

In addition, the Department of Education would have to prepare and submit an annual report to the legislature, using the information submitted, aggregated for statewide and intermediate school district totals.

Student Portfolios. Currently, a school district must maintain a student portfolio for each pupil, containing, among other items, students' academic transcripts. The bill would require, in addition, that a school district provide and maintain all correspondence and other academic records relating to the pupil's enrollment in a postsecondary course under the provisions of the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, or the student's participation in a CLEC.

Michigan Information Network. Currently, the act requires that the DMB prepare a plan to establish a Michigan information network, effective June 30, 1995. House Bill 4640 would replace this provision with one that would require, in addition, that the plan include specific recommendations for using the network to promote delivery of CLECs. Under the bill, the DMB would have to prepare a state plan for a Michigan Information Network by June 30, 1995. The network would link -- by a system such as fiber optic or coaxial cable -- each local and intermediate school district, community college, independent nonprofit college or university in the state, and each state public university and local or regional library, on an equal basis, to provide a world-class statewide interactive video and data access and exchange system.

House Bill 4641 would add a section to the State School Aid Act (MCL 388.1695) to allocate an unspecified amount of money from the School Aid Fund, and appropriating an amount from the College Level Equivalent Incentive Fund for the purpose of making the CLEC incentive award payments outlined above.

Postsecondary Enrollment Options.

House Bill 4643 would create a new act, the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act. The purpose of the act would be to provide a wider variety of options to high school students by encouraging qualified students to enroll in courses in postsecondary institutions. The bill would require school districts to pay tuition and other fees for eligible high school students to attend certain in-state postsecondary academic courses not offered by the school district. The bill would take effect July 1, 1995, with payment of eligible charges beginning October 1, 1995. The act would be repealed June 30, 2001. The Department of Education would promulgate rules necessary to implement the act.

Foreign exchange students would be expressly excluded from eligibility for this program. However, all other high school students who have completed the requirements for a state endorsed diploma in all subject areas as specified in the School Code would be eligible to enroll in any authorized postsecondary courses offered through in-state colleges and universities. Those students in grade 12 who had not passed the proficiency test in all subject areas would be limited to attending those courses involving subject areas for which they had passed the state proficiency test at the appropriate level, computer science or foreign language classes not offered by the school district, and fine arts classes as permitted by the school district. Eligible postsecondary courses would be academic courses only, and could not include physical education; theology, divinity, or religious education; and hobby craft or recreational courses. The bill would prohibit students enrolled in the program from participating in college athletic programs.

School districts would be required to provide general information concerning postsecondary enrollment opportunities to all students in the 8th grade or higher by March 1 of each year. Eligible students intending to enroll in a postsecondary course through this act in the following school year would have to inform the district by March 30; however, students would not be bound by making or failing to make such a notification. The district would also be required to provide counseling and more specific information to interested students and their parents or guardians, fully advising them of the risks and benefits involved in enrolling in a postsecondary course. Students in 11th grade or lower would also be allowed to seek eligibility through participation in regularly scheduled testing upon the written request of the student's parent or guardian. The student would not be required to pay to participate in the examination and unsuccessful attempts would not be required to be reflected in the district's annual education report.

Prior to enrollment in a postsecondary course through the act, the student and his or her parent or guardian would be required to provide the postsecondary institution with a signed form, provided by the district, indicating the student and his or her parent or guardian received information and understood the responsibilities involved in enrolling in the course as explained to them by the district's counselor. This would include information regarding :

- ** The student's enrollment eligibility;
- ** The types of courses and institutions available;

- ** Eligibility for payment of all or part of the eligible charges by the school district;
- ** Available support services;
- ** The need to arrange an appropriate schedule;
- ** The possible consequences of failing or not completing a post secondary course;
- ** The possible effect enrollment in a postsecondary course could have on the student's ability to complete the required high school graduation requirements;
- ** The academic and social responsibilities that the student and his or her parents or guardian would have to assume;
- ** The charges which would be paid by the school district;
- ** The financial arrangements for eligible charges and for paying costs not covered by the school district;
- ** How the school district would be responsible for paying the postsecondary institution directly and that the parent/guardian and child would not be responsible for that payment but would be responsible for payment of those costs not paid for under the act; and
- ** How the parent or guardian of a student in at least the eighth grade could request that the student be given the opportunity to take a test or assessment for state endorsement before grade twelve to qualify as an eligible student.

The counselor would also encourage the parent/guardian and student to make use of whatever counseling services are available through the eligible postsecondary institutions.

The district would also be required to provide all eligible students with copies of all correspondence relating to their eligibility and participation in postsecondary courses. Although postsecondary institutions would be allowed to give priority to their own students during the enrollment process, the institution could not displace an already enrolled high school student with a postsecondary student. Once a student were enrolled and attending a postsecondary course, the school district would be allowed to require the student to provide the district with reasonable written verification of his or her regular attendance of that postsecondary course.

After enrollment, the school district would be billed directly by the postsecondary institution. The district would pay for the student's tuition, course fees, registration fees, books, and materials from the district's per pupil foundation allowance, as allocated under the State School Aid Act. To the extent that these funds are insufficient to cover the eligible costs the student and/or his or her parents or guardian would be required to make up the difference. If the student failed to complete the course, the institution would refund the grant money to the district. Transportation and all risks of liability associated with transportation to and from the university would be the responsibility of the student.

Furthermore, the student would be required to pay any activity fees, and transportation and parking costs.

A student taking a postsecondary course would have to designate whether credit for the course would be for high school or postsecondary credit, or both. School districts would be required to grant high school credit for postsecondary courses completed, although the amount of high school credit to be allowed for a particular postsecondary course would be left to the discretion of the district. These credits would have to be applied toward the student's graduation and subject area requirements. The postsecondary institution would be required to provide the school district with a copy of the student's grade in any postsecondary course taken for high school credit under the bill. At the request of the student the high school would be required to reflect the student's successful completion of and postsecondary credit for courses taken under the bill. The district would also be required to reflect in the student's record and transcript that the student's credits were earned at a postsecondary level and identify the institution.

Intermediate school districts would be required to include dual enrollment figures within their annual comprehensive financial reports to the Department of Education. Such data collected from constituent local districts would include:

- ** The amount of money expended by the district to pay for courses under the bill;
- ** The number of eligible students enrolled in the district and the number of those who enrolled in one or more postsecondary courses and received payment for all or part of their eligible charges under the bill, and the percentage of the district's enrollment represented by those students, both by grade level and as a whole; and
- ** The total number of postsecondary courses the district paid for under the bill, the number of courses for which students received postsecondary credit, the number of those courses for which high school credit was given, and the number of those courses that were not completed by the student.

The Department of Education would be required to prepare and submit an annual summary of this information to the House and Senate Fiscal Agencies and the Department of Management and Budget.

House Bill 4642 would amend the State School Aid Act (MCL 388.1606 et al.) to replace current language dealing with dual enrollment in high school and college level courses with a reference to the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act, as proposed in House Bill 4643. (Current language provides that a student may attend a postsecondary institution and receive tuition and fee support from the district, if all of the following conditions are met:

- a) The student is in at least the 12th grade and has qualified for state endorsement in all subject areas, but has not completed all local requirements for graduation.

b) The student is enrolled in the district and the postsecondary institution during the school district's regular academic year.

c) The student is attending an academic course not offered by the district and not ordinarily taken as an "activity course." However, the district may not restrict a student from attending courses at a postsecondary institution solely upon the student's eligibility for tuition and fee support.

Also under current language in the State School Aid Act, the school district is required to mail a letter to all students who will be in the 12th grade in the upcoming school year explaining how students could be eligible to attend postsecondary courses with tuition and fee support from the district. If a student is interested in attending postsecondary courses under the act, the student can get a letter from his or her principal indicating the student's eligibility.

If the student attends the postsecondary institution, the institution is to bill the district, and the district pays the lesser of the actual tuition and fees or the district's per pupil state aid. The student and/or his or her parent/guardian are required to pay the difference. If the student fails to complete the course the institution must provide any refunded amount to the district.)

Further, the bill would require a school district, upon the written request of a student's parent or legal guardian, to allow a student in grade 8 or higher to take, without charge, the tests necessary to allow the student to attend postsecondary courses under House Bill 4643 (the high school proficiency tests, GED test, or MEAP test). The school district would only be required to report on the test results of students in grade 10 or higher. House Bill 4644 would add this same language to the School Code (MCL 380.1279).