



On behalf of Washington's community and technical colleges and public universities that participate in the Running Start program, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and Council of Presidents (COP) recognize the importance of meaningful collaboration between our organizations to advance educational opportunities for students across our state. We have been engaged in regular communication with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) since the end of the 2023 legislative session to ensure that program guidance and training related to [HB 1316](#) resulted in thoughtful and effective policy change. Therefore, we maintain serious concerns regarding the announcement on August 1 that OSPI is planning to rescind agreed upon guidance that has been in place since May.

The intent of this new legislation was to expand access to Running Start, improve high school graduation rates, and increase degree and/or credential attainment at our colleges and universities. Unfortunately, OSPI's proposed withdrawal of the recent guidance will negatively impact our most underserved students and families at a time when we are all focused on closing equity gaps, leading to additional out-of-pocket costs for students and families and impede students' graduation plans for this school year.

In addition, our institutions have embraced HB 1316 with great enthusiasm in advancing equity in dual credit. To ensure that our institutions are student ready for these changes, we have dedicated time and resources since the end of session to make system changes and revisions to business practices to ensure a seamless transition for students and our school district partners (see communications and trainings below).

Over 19,000 students have enrolled in the fall quarter under the current policy guidance. As students continue to enroll over the summer, we expect to see a statewide enrollment of about 26,000. These students have enrolled under the premise that they can take up to 21 credits for fall quarter, winter, and spring tuition free and their educational plans and prior advising and counseling sessions reflect that.

Immediate impacts to students and families:

- Students and families are now financially responsible for any tuition that exceeds 15 credits.
- Students will have inaccurate educational plans that will need revision, resulting in possible delay of high school graduation and degree/credential attainment, specifically students pursuing workforce education programs.

Immediate impacts to high school, college, and university staff:

- High school, college, and university staff will need to reach out to all students and families affected and revise educational plans and fall schedules.
- High school, college, and university staff will need to shift overall business operations & rescind all communication and outreach to students and families.

Financial impacts to colleges and universities:

Additional staff time to reverse policy guidance-

- All PeopleSoft configurations for 34 community and technical colleges.
- New training sessions addressing how and why program guidance was rescinded.

Tuition and reimbursements-

- Colleges and universities may need to waive additional tuition for students not prepared to pay for additional credits. This comes at a time when overall tuition revenue for community colleges continues to be impacted by the slow recovery from the pandemic.
- Colleges and universities will not be compensated the same reimbursement amount for summer quarter. Since colleges undertook their planning and enrollment for summer quarter with a different understanding of the OSPI reimbursement model, this sudden and unilateral change gives colleges no opportunity to adjust their operations to the new reimbursement model.

Finally, we continue to be concerned about the lack of collaboration and consultation with OSPI leadership as it pertains to dual credit. Section 4 of [RCW 28A.600.310](#) directs OSPI to consult with SBCTC and institutions of higher education participating in Running Start regarding the calculation and distribution of funds. Additionally, Section 3 of HB 1316 states that OSPI shall jointly develop and adopt rules governing [RCW 28A.600.300](#) through [28A.600.380](#) and Section 1 if rules are necessary; and the rules shall be written to encourage the maximum use of the program and shall not narrow or limit the enrollment options. While staff across the three sectors collaborated on the initial implementation and rulemaking, this most recent communication lacked authentic partnership to address any concerns or emerging issues from agency leadership.

We believe all three sectors have a strong commitment to do no harm to students and families. We strongly encourage OSPI to reconsider this decision and hold harmless students and families for the 2023-24 school year. In addition, we ask OSPI to authentically collaborate with our institutions moving forward to identify a long-term solution. We look forward to further engaging in this policy guidance and expanding access to dual credit opportunities for all Washington students.

Sincerely,



Paul Francis
Executive Director, State Board for
Community and Technical Colleges



Ruben Flores
Executive Director, Council of Presidents

Communications and Training to Implement HB 1316

5/18/2023 Release of [OSPI Bulletin](#) outlining policy and program guidance for HB 1316

5/22 Virtual training hosted by SBCTC ctcLink and policy staff

5/26/2023 Release of Running Start Enrollment Verification Form (RSEVF) with a formatted FTE table highlighting that colleges may claim students for more than 1.0 FTE by taking up to 21 credits fall, winter, and spring.

6/1 Virtual Q&A session hosted by OSPI, SBCTC, and COP.

6/5 Virtual training hosted by SBCTC ctcLink and policy staff

6/23 Virtual Q&A session hosted by OSPI, SBCTC, and COP

Upcoming trainings that have been advertised

8/22 Virtual Q&A session hosted by OSPI, SBCTC, and COP

8/24 Virtual Q&A session hosted by OSPI, SBCTC, and COP

8/28 Virtual training hosted by SBCTC ctcLink and policy staff

8/30 Virtual training hosted by SBCTC ctcLink and policy staff

9/28 Webinar hosted by OSPI, SBCTC, and COP