DRAFT ONLY
NOT APPROVED FOR INTRODUCTION

HOUSE BILL NO.

Running start educational program study.

Sponsored by: Representative(s) Andrew

A BILL

for

AN ACT relating to education; requiring the Wyoming community college commission to study and develop recommendations for an expanded statewide postsecondary education program as specified; requiring a report; providing an appropriation; and providing for an effective date.

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

Section 1.

(a) The Wyoming community college commission shall conduct a study to evaluate the creation of an expanded

statewide postsecondary education program designed to increase and maximize opportunities for students to complete postsecondary coursework and to earn postsecondary credentials through the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges while enrolled in Wyoming public high schools. The study shall include consideration of existing Wyoming programs and programs administered by other states that serve to accomplish the goals as specified in this subsection.

(b) The commission shall conduct the study in consultation with representatives from:

(i) Wyoming community colleges;

(ii) The University of Wyoming;

(iii) The department of education;

(iv) The state board of education;

(v) Wyoming school districts, including administrators, counselors and teachers;

(vi) Students and parents;

(vii) Workforce development and economic development organizations;

(viii) Other stakeholders the commission determines appropriate.

(c) The study shall, at minimum, include consideration and appropriate recommendations regarding the following:

(i) Expansion of opportunities for students enrolled in Wyoming public high schools to earn an associate degree, workforce credential or substantial postsecondary credit through the University of Wyoming or Wyoming community colleges prior to high school graduation, including a statewide goal that students have an opportunity to complete an associate degree before graduating from high school;

(ii) Student eligibility requirements and participation standards;

(iii) Funding for implementation of an expanded statewide postsecondary education program, as contemplated by this act, including consideration of:

(A) Necessary adjustments to the existing funding of school districts, the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges;

(B) Cost efficiencies that may be realized through streamlined funding mechanisms;

(C) Potential fiscal impacts to school districts, Wyoming community colleges, the University of Wyoming and the state.

(iv) Whether students should be permitted to enroll full-time in postsecondary coursework while remaining enrolled in and graduating from their resident school district;

(v) The extent to which successfully completed postsecondary coursework should satisfy high school

graduation requirements, including whether school districts should be required to award both high school and postsecondary credit for qualifying coursework;

(vi) Current enrollment practices utilized by school districts, the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges for high school student participation in postsecondary coursework and any barriers that exist to student participation;

(vii) Geographic access to postsecondary coursework offered by the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges, including access through distance education and technology-based delivery systems;

(viii) Student advising, counseling and support services to increase high school student participation in postsecondary coursework through the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges;

(ix) Course transferability between participating school districts, the University of Wyoming and Wyoming community colleges;

(x) Data collection and reporting systems necessary for program evaluation and accountability;

(xi) Opportunities to align postsecondary coursework as contemplated by this study with opportunities to meet Wyoming workforce needs and economic development priorities.

(d) The commission shall prepare a report containing:

(i) Recommendations to establish an expanded statewide postsecondary education program as contemplated by this act, including but not limited to the elements contained in subsection (c) of this section;

(ii) A fiscal impact analysis of recommended options;

(iii) Proposed legislation necessary to implement the commission's recommendations.

(e) Not later than January 1, 2028, the commission shall submit the report required by subsection (d) to the joint education interim committee.

Section 2. There is appropriated one hundred fifty thousand dollars ($150,000.00) from the general fund to the Wyoming community college commission for the purpose of conducting the study required by this act. This appropriation shall be for the period beginning with the effective date of this act and ending June 30, 2028. This appropriation shall not be transferred or expended for any other purpose and any unexpended, unobligated funds remaining from this appropriation shall revert as provided by law. It is the intent of the legislature that this appropriation not be included in the community college commission's standard budget for the immediately succeeding fiscal biennium.

Section 3. This act is effective immediately upon completion of all acts necessary for a bill to become law as provided by Article 4, Section 8 of the Wyoming Constitution.

(END)