

CO-SPONSORSHIP MEMORANDUM

DATE: 1/5/18

TO: Legislative Colleagues

FROM: Representative Rohrkaste
Senator Olsen

RE: Co-sponsorship of LRB-4613/1 relating to: a pilot grant program to support college courses taught in high schools and making an appropriation.

DEADLINE: Wednesday, January 10th at 12 PM

LRB 4613 is being introduced for co-sponsorship to help remedy an issue regarding faculty education standards for dual credit teachers set forth by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The HLC is an organization that accredits post-secondary institutions in 19 states, including Wisconsin and our neighboring states of Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, and Minnesota. This accreditation makes schools eligible for federal funds. The HLC accredits post-secondary schools on a variety of criteria, including the quality of education. An aspect of the quality of education is that the faculty of the institution provide effective, high-quality programs and student services.

The HLC has criteria that post-secondary institutions must meet to maintain their accreditation. If schools do not follow these criteria, they could lose their accreditation and therefore also lose access to federal funds. The HLC has adjusted their "Assumed Practices" to require that any faculty member must have one of the following: (1) a Master's Degree in the discipline; or (2) a Master's Degree in another discipline and at least 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline. Because many high school teachers in Wisconsin also teach dual credit courses for college credit, they would be held to this standard. This will mean that a high school teacher who is teaching a course is required to have at least 18 graduate-level college credits in order to teach a dual credit course to high schoolers. This is because many teachers have a Master's Degree in Education or in School Administration and not in the discipline they are teaching. The HLC gave institutions until September 1, 2017, to come into compliance with its revised faculty qualification requirement, but HLC also allowed institutions with dual credit programs to apply for an extension of 5 years (until September 1, 2022) to become compliant.

LRB 4613 requires the Office of Educational Opportunity at the University of Wisconsin System to award grants to school districts, independent charter schools, and private schools to assist high school teachers in meeting the minimum qualifications necessary to teach dual enrollment courses for a post-secondary school accredited by the HLC. The legislation provides for a \$500,000 pilot grant program with the requirement that each year at least one grant shall be awarded to a school district with fewer than 650 pupils, a school district with 650 – 1,600 pupils, a school district with over 1,600 pupils, a charter school, and a private school. The school would then choose through their own process teachers to assist in meeting the minimum education requirements set forth by the HLC.

If you would like to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Tyler Clark in Rep. Rohrkaste's office at 6-5719 or Jenna Zantow in Senator Olsen's office at 6-0751 by **noon on Wednesday, January 10th, 2018**. All authors will be added to both the Assembly and Senate bills unless otherwise directed.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires the Office of Educational Opportunity in the University of Wisconsin System to award grants to school districts, independent charter schools, and private schools participating in a parental choice program to support dual enrollment programs taught in high schools. The bill defines "dual enrollment programs" as programs or courses of study designed to provide high school students with the opportunity to gain credits in both high school and a UW System school or technical college. Under the bill, grants are awarded to assist high school teachers in meeting the minimal qualifications necessary to teach dual enrollment courses. No grants may be awarded after June 30, 2022.

For further information see the *state and local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.