Bill No.: SB-813
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF ISSUES RELATING TO EARLY COLLEGE AND DUAL ENROLLMENT PROGRAMS.
Vote Date: 3/6/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/22/2019
File No.: 131

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Education Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
This bill would be a study to assess Connecticut’s progress in their early college and dual enrollment programs. In this case, the data collected would compare the general body of students to students enrolled in the early college and dual enrollment programs. Data points of comparison would include graduation rate, grade point average, and class rank. Additionally, this study would address an inquiry into the methods by which local boards of education are reporting dual enrollment and early college program enrollments.

SUBSTITUTE LANGUAGE:
This language eliminates the requirement that the State Department of Education would have to collect data on grade point averages and class ranking. The substitute language narrows the scope of the study to how early college and dual enrollment programs are reporting enrollment data and the rates of graduation of enrollees of said program relative to the graduation rates of the total student population.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
Dianna R. Wentzell, Commissioner, State of Connecticut Department of Education(SDE): SDE generally supports this bill. SDE can reasonably collect data regarding enrollment in college and dual enrollment programs and graduation rates. On the other hand, grade point average and class rank do not have a common method of calculation. Said methods of calculation are determined by local boards of education. Therefore, the SDE cannot facilitate
the grade point average and class rank portion of this study within their current funding at this
time.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Matthew Conway, Superintendent, Co-Chair, Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS):
CAPSS supports this bill as written.

Amy Dowell, Connecticut State Director, Education Reform Now Connecticut (ERN):
ERN supports this bill. ERN would like to see this discussion of Early College and Dual Enrollment Programs expand from college readiness to college and career pathway readiness. The scope of this study should go beyond The State Department of Education and expand to all workforce development and training pipeline programs.

Subira Gordon, Executive Director, ConnCAN:
Executive Director Gordon supports this bill. Executive Director Gordon cites Indiana’s Commission for Higher Education as evidence that an early college and dual enrollment program increases higher education enrollment and lowers students’ tuition costs. Executive Director Gordon cites ‘awareness’ as being the key factor in student participation in said programs. This study will be a good first step for Connecticut in establishing a robust dual enrollment and early college program.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Shannon Marimon, Executive Director, Connecticut Council for Education Reform:
Executive Director Marimon opposes this bill. Connecticut is focusing too heavily on encouraging higher education attainment and is not focusing enough on career pathways and outcomes. CCER recommends adopting a similar program that Utah has enacted called ‘Talent Ready Utah’. CCER believes that career pathway programs need to prepare students with specific job training particular to industry workforce demands. The implementation of said career pathways should not be the sole responsibility State Department of Education. Instead, private industry, non-profits, and all state departments involved in workforce development should collaboratively identify and establish educational initiatives that teach skills pertinent to economic demands. Attainment of higher education should not be the focus of this study, skill attainment and employment data would be a superior focus for this study.

Reported by: Colin Carroll Date: 3/26/19