Accelerated Learning Concerns

Governance:

- Shift in control of awarding college and university credit to the school districts, impacting the shared governance between school districts and universities.
- Need to ensure that the approval of high school instructors is consistent with the selection process currently used by post-secondary institutions in hiring part-time faculty.
- Does this legislation supersede legislation in 2009 that set statewide standards for dual credit?
- Grants vs incentives: Consider an incentive to districts for teacher training and textbooks. For example, an incentive to every school district to reach a certain goal for percentage of high school teachers who are dual-credit eligible.
- Student eligibility:
  - Excluding courses that are exclusively provided online disadvantages rural students.
  - Question whether 9th and 10th grade students have the knowledge and experience necessary to succeed in college courses. Currently, the Challenge Program at PSU is for seniors, with exceptions made for juniors based on instructor and course.
  - No reference to home-schooled students. It should be clear that homeschooled students are eligible for funds from the districts. Many homeschooled students are currently taking advantage of accelerated learning courses.

Fiscal impact:

- Fiscal impact study needs to be done.
- If the intent is to eliminate all charges to students for dual-credit programs, we would propose the alternative of deeply discounting tuition to help offset program costs while promoting a student’s engagement in courses.
- We may support a process that includes negotiating rates between the districts and post-secondary institutions. However, if the basis for those negotiations is to include a floor, a ceiling, or default rate, there needs to be clarifying language in the bill. We can support the recommended percentages of the Accelerated Learning Community Concept Paper Fiscal Impacts presentation, except that we recommend that the percentage for the floor be increased to 15% to cover the minimal expenses of the post-secondary institutions.

Prepared by Brad Burda – 9/29/14