
Education Committee

ESSB 5587

Brief Description: Concerning student assessments.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Litzow, Dammeier, Rivers, Fain and Tom).

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement student assessments developed with a multistate consortium in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics in the 2014-15 school year.
- Requires results from the high school ELA and mathematics assessments from the consortium to be used for purposes of high school graduation beginning with the graduating class of 2018.
- Ends the use of state high school end-of-course assessments in mathematics after 2014-15.
- Requires school districts to notify parents of students in grades 8 through 12 at the beginning of each school year about state-required assessments and graduation requirements.

Hearing Date: 3/15/13

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Statewide Student Assessment System.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE), is authorized to maintain and revise a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards, and to use for purposes of state and federal accountability. The assessment system must cover the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

In 2008 legislation was enacted requiring high school mathematics to be assessed using end-of-course tests (EOCs) in Algebra I and Geometry. In 2011 legislation directed that high school science be assessed using a Biology EOC.

The federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades 3 through 8 and one high school grade, as well as in at least one grade each in elementary, middle, and high school in science.

High School Graduation.

Since the graduating class of 2008, Washington students have been required to meet the state standard on the assessment in reading and writing for high school graduation. Students in the graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 will also have to meet the standard in at least one of the mathematics EOCs. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, students will have to meet the standard on the state assessment in reading, writing, two mathematics EOCs, and the Biology EOC for high school graduation.

Common Core State Standards and Assessments.

In 2011 the SPI adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) as the state learning standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. Washington is participating in a multistate consortium to develop new student assessments for the CCSS. The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) will have assessments ready for states to use in 2014-15 for federal accountability purposes. The SBAC high school assessments in ELA and mathematics will be set at a College and Career Readiness level, to be administered in 11th grade.

The GET Ready for Math and Science Scholarship Program provides a scholarships to students who receive the top score on the mathematics or science portions of the high school assessment. The current law refers to the "tenth grade" assessment, which is no longer accurate.

Summary of Bill:

Statewide Student Assessment System.

The SPI is directed to implement student assessments developed with a multistate consortium in the ELA and mathematics, beginning in the 2014-15 school year. References to reading and writing as they pertain to the statewide student assessment system are replaced with references to the ELA. The high school EOCs in mathematics are not administered after the 2014-15 school year.

High School Graduation.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2018, the high school assessments in the ELA and mathematics from the multistate consortium are used to demonstrate that students meet the state standard in those subjects. The assessments must be comprehensive and not EOCs.

During the period of transition to the new assessments, students in the graduating classes of 2016 and 2017 may use the following for purposes of meeting graduation requirements:

- the reading and writing assessments or the new high school ELA assessment; and
- the Algebra I and Geometry EOCs or the new high school mathematics assessment.

All students may continue to retake assessments and use approved alternative assessments if they do not meet the standard on the state assessments on the first attempt.

At the beginning of each school year, districts must notify parents of enrolled students in grades 8 through 12 about each student assessment required by the state, the minimum state graduation requirements, and any additional local graduation requirements. Information to be provided about the assessments is specified, and the OSPI must provide the information to school districts so that they may in turn provide it to parents.

References to the high school assessments in mathematics and science are corrected as they pertain to the GET Ready for Mathematics and Science Scholarship Program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on March 11, 2013.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.