

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6516

As Passed Senate, February 13, 1996

Title: An act relating to modifying the timelines for the development and implementation of the student assessment system.

Brief Description: Changing the timelines for development and implementation of the student assessment system.

Sponsors: Senators McAuliffe, Rinehart, Drew and Winsley; by request of Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring, Board of Education and Commission on Student Learning.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 1/25/96, 2/1/96 [DPS].
Passed Senate, 2/13/96, 46-3.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 6516 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Goings, Vice Chair; Hochstatter, Pelz and Rasmussen.

Staff: Leslie Goldstein (786-7424)

Background: The Commission on Student Learning was created by the Legislature in 1992 to identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do, to develop student assessment and school accountability systems, and to take other steps necessary to improve student learning in the state.

Current law requires that the assessments being developed by the commission for all grade levels be available for reading, writing, communication, and mathematics for voluntary use by school districts in the 1996-97 school year unless the Legislature takes action to prevent or delay implementation of the assessments. The assessments being developed for all grade levels for the social, physical and life sciences, civics and history, geography, arts, and health and fitness are required to be available for voluntary use by the 1998-99 school year.

Summary of Bill: The timeline for the voluntary implementation of the assessments being developed by the Commission on Student Learning for reading, writing, communication, and mathematics is modified.

The initial voluntary implementation of these assessments in the elementary grades is not changed from the 1996-97 school year. The assessments for the middle grades are postponed one school year, from the 1996-97 school year until the 1997-98 school year. The

assessments for the high school grades are postponed two years, from the 1996-97 school year until the 1998-98 school year.

The timeline for the transfer to the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the assessments being developed by the Commission on Student Learning for the social, physical and life sciences, civics and history, geography, arts, and health and fitness is postponed from the 1998-99 school year to June 30, 1999.

The statewide mandatory use of the assessments by school districts, which is to occur beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, is not changed.

Changes are made regarding when the Commission on Student Learning is to transfer the assessment system to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: The certificate of mastery needs to be reviewed. Limiting the elementary grades assessment to goal 1 and mathematics has been supported by the Commission on Student Learning. Other changes have not been reviewed by the commission. Adjusting the timelines is a prudent step, one which recognizes that the work is too important to rush. The directive for the commission, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Board to work closely together is appreciated.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Terry Bergeson, John Traynor, Gordon Ensign, Commission on Student Learning; Gary Gainer, Commission on Student Learning and State Board of Education.