
HOUSE BILL 2539

State of Washington

54th Legislature

1996 Regular Session

By Representative Elliot

Read first time 01/12/96. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the student assessment system to be developed by
2 the commission on student learning; reenacting and amending RCW
3 28A.630.885; repealing 1995 c 335 s 803 (uncodified); and providing an
4 expiration date.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

6 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.630.885 and 1995 c 335 s 505 and 1995 c 209 s 1
7 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

8 (1) The Washington commission on student learning is hereby
9 established. The primary purposes of the commission are to identify
10 the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be
11 able to do based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, to
12 develop student assessment and school accountability systems, to review
13 current school district data reporting requirements and make
14 recommendations on what data is necessary for the purposes of
15 accountability and meeting state information needs, and to take other
16 steps necessary to develop a performance-based education system. The
17 commission shall include three members of the state board of education,
18 three members appointed by the governor before July 1, 1992, and five
19 members appointed no later than June 1, 1993, by the governor elected

1 in the November 1992 election. The governor shall appoint a chair from
2 the commission members, and fill any vacancies in gubernatorial
3 appointments that may occur. The state board of education shall fill
4 any vacancies of state board of education appointments that may occur.
5 In making the appointments, educators, business leaders, and parents
6 shall be represented, and nominations from state-wide education,
7 business, and parent organizations shall be requested. Efforts shall
8 be made to ensure that the commission reflects the racial and ethnic
9 diversity of the state's K-12 student population and that the major
10 geographic regions in the state are represented. Appointees shall be
11 qualified individuals who are supportive of educational restructuring,
12 who have a positive record of service, and who will devote sufficient
13 time to the responsibilities of the commission to ensure that the
14 objectives of the commission are achieved.

15 (2) The commission shall establish advisory committees. Membership
16 of the advisory committees shall include, but not necessarily be
17 limited to, parents, business representatives, professionals from the
18 office of the superintendent of public instruction and the state board
19 of education, and other state and local educational practitioners and
20 student assessment specialists.

21 (3) The commission, with the assistance of the advisory committees,
22 shall:

23 (a) Develop essential academic learning requirements based on the
24 student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Essential academic learning
25 requirements shall be developed, to the extent possible, for each of
26 the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall
27 be considered primary. Essential academic learning requirements for
28 RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW
29 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be completed no later than March 1,
30 1995. Essential academic learning requirements that incorporate the
31 remainder of RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals two, three, and
32 four, shall be completed no later than March 1, 1996. To the maximum
33 extent possible, the commission shall integrate goal four and the
34 knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the development of the
35 essential academic learning requirements;

36 (b)(i) The commission shall present to the state board of education
37 and superintendent of public instruction a state-wide academic
38 assessment system for use in the elementary, middle, and high school
39 years designed to determine if each student has mastered the essential

1 academic learning requirements (~~(identified in (a) of this subsection)~~)
2 for RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW
3 28A.150.210(2), goal two. The academic assessment system shall include
4 a variety of criterion-referenced assessment methods, including
5 performance-based measures (~~((that are criterion-referenced))~~).
6 Performance standards for determining if a student has successfully
7 completed an assessment shall be initially determined by the commission
8 in consultation with the advisory committees required in subsection (2)
9 of this section.

10 (ii) The assessment system shall be designed so that the results
11 under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to evaluate
12 instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate educational
13 support for students who have not mastered the goal one and mathematics
14 essential academic learning requirements at the appropriate periods in
15 the student's educational development.

16 (iii) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning
17 requirements developed for RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the
18 mathematics component of RCW 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be
19 initially implemented by the state board of education and
20 superintendent of public instruction no later than the 1996-97 school
21 year, unless the legislature takes action to delay or prevent
22 implementation of the assessment system and essential academic learning
23 requirements. (~~((Assessments measuring the essential academic learning~~
24 ~~requirements developed for RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals~~
25 ~~two, three, and four, shall be initially implemented by the state board~~
26 ~~of education and superintendent of public instruction no later than the~~
27 ~~1998-99 school year, unless the legislature takes action to delay or~~
28 ~~prevent implementation of the assessment system and essential academic~~
29 ~~learning requirements.))~~ To the maximum extent possible, the
30 commission shall integrate knowledge and skill areas in development of
31 the assessments.

32 (iv) Before the 2000-2001 school year, participation by school
33 districts in the assessment system shall be optional. School districts
34 that desire to participate before the 2000-2001 school year shall
35 notify the superintendent of public instruction in a manner determined
36 by the superintendent. Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, all
37 school districts shall be required to participate in the assessment
38 system.

1 (v) The state board of education and superintendent of public
2 instruction may modify the essential academic learning requirements and
3 academic assessment system, as needed, in subsequent school years.

4 (vi) The commission shall develop assessments that are directly
5 related to the essential academic learning requirements, and are not
6 biased toward persons with different learning styles, racial or ethnic
7 backgrounds, or on the basis of gender;

8 (c) After a determination is made by the state board of education
9 that the high school assessment system has been implemented and that it
10 is sufficiently reliable and valid, successful completion of each
11 component of the high school assessment shall lead to a certificate of
12 mastery. There shall be individual certificates of mastery in reading,
13 writing, communication, and mathematics. The certificates of mastery
14 shall be obtained by most students at about the age of sixteen, and
15 ~~((is))~~ are evidence that the student has successfully mastered the
16 reading, writing, communication, and mathematics essential academic
17 learning requirements during his or her educational career. The four
18 certificates of mastery shall be required for graduation but shall not
19 be the only requirements for graduation. The commission shall make
20 recommendations to the state board of education regarding the
21 relationship between the certificates of mastery and high school
22 graduation requirements. Upon achieving the certificates of mastery,
23 schools shall provide students with the opportunity to continue to
24 pursue career and educational objectives through educational pathways
25 that emphasize integration of academic and vocational education.
26 Educational pathways may include, but are not limited to, programs such
27 as work-based learning, school-to-work transition, tech prep,
28 vocational-technical education, running start, and preparation for
29 technical college, community college, or university education;

30 (d) Consider methods to address the unique needs of special
31 education students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of
32 this subsection;

33 (e) Consider methods to address the unique needs of highly capable
34 students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of this
35 subsection;

36 (f) Develop recommendations on the time, support, and resources,
37 including technical assistance, needed by schools and school districts
38 to help students achieve the essential academic learning requirements.
39 These recommendations shall include an estimate for the legislature,

1 superintendent of public instruction, and governor on the expected cost
2 of implementing the academic assessment system;

3 (g) Develop recommendations for consideration by the higher
4 education coordinating board for adopting college and university
5 entrance requirements for public school students that are consistent
6 with the essential academic learning requirements and the certificate
7 of mastery;

8 (h) Review current school district data reporting requirements for
9 the purposes of accountability and meeting state information needs.
10 The commission on student learning shall report recommendations to the
11 joint select committee on education restructuring by September 15,
12 1996, on:

13 (i) What data is necessary to compare how school districts are
14 performing before the essential academic learning requirements and the
15 assessment system are implemented with how school districts are
16 performing after the essential academic learning requirements and the
17 assessment system are implemented; and

18 (ii) What data is necessary pertaining to school district reports
19 under the accountability systems developed by the commission on student
20 learning under this section;

21 (i) By June 30, 1999, recommend to the legislature, governor, state
22 board of education, and superintendent of public instruction:

23 (i) A state-wide accountability system to monitor and evaluate
24 accurately and fairly the level of learning occurring in individual
25 schools and school districts. The accountability system shall be
26 designed to recognize the characteristics of the student population of
27 schools and school districts such as gender, race, ethnicity,
28 socioeconomic status, and other factors. The system shall include
29 school-site, school district, and state-level accountability reports;

30 (ii) A school assistance program to help schools and school
31 districts that are having difficulty helping students meet the
32 essential academic learning requirements;

33 (iii) A system to intervene in schools and school districts in
34 which significant numbers of students persistently fail to learn the
35 essential academic learning requirements; and

36 (iv) An awards program to provide incentives to school staff to
37 help their students learn the essential academic learning requirements,
38 with each school being assessed individually against its own baseline.
39 Incentives shall be based on the rate of percentage change of students

1 achieving the essential academic learning requirements. School staff
2 shall determine how the awards will be spent.

3 It is the intent of the legislature to begin implementation of
4 programs in this subsection (3)(i) on September 1, 2000;

5 (j) Report annually by December 1st to the legislature, the
6 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board
7 of education on the progress, findings, and recommendations of the
8 commission; and

9 (k) Make recommendations to the legislature and take other actions
10 necessary or desirable to help students meet the student learning
11 goals.

12 (4) The commission shall coordinate its activities with the state
13 board of education and the office of the superintendent of public
14 instruction.

15 (5) The commission shall seek advice broadly from the public and
16 all interested educational organizations in the conduct of its work,
17 including holding periodic regional public hearings.

18 (6) The commission shall select an entity to provide staff support
19 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
20 provide administrative oversight and be the fiscal agent for the
21 commission. The commission may direct the office of the superintendent
22 of public instruction to enter into subcontracts, within the
23 commission's resources, with school districts, teachers, higher
24 education faculty, state agencies, business organizations, and other
25 individuals and organizations to assist the commission in its
26 deliberations.

27 (7) Members of the commission shall be reimbursed for travel
28 expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

29 (8) This section expires June 30, 1999.

30 NEW SECTION. Sec. 2. 1995 c 335 s 803 (uncodified) is repealed.

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