

HOUSE BILL REPORT

ESB 5686

As Reported by House Committee On:
Appropriations

Title: An act relating to changing academic assessments timelines.

Brief Description: Changing academic assessments timelines.

Sponsors: By Senators Eide, Rasmussen, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe and Carlson; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Appropriations: 4/11/01, 4/18/01 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill
(As Amended by House Committee)

- Revises the timelines for the voluntary and required administration of the science, social studies and arts assessments of the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.
- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to make recommendations on the arts, and health and fitness timelines.
- Deletes references to the certificate of mastery.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 21 members: Representatives Sehlin, Republican Co-Chair; H. Sommers, Democratic Co-Chair; Barlean, Republican Vice Chair; Doumit, Democratic Vice Chair; Lisk, Republican Vice Chair; Buck, Cody, Dunshee, Fromhold, Gombosky, Kagi, Keiser, Kenney, Lambert, Linville, Mulliken, Pearson, Ruderman, D. Schmidt, Schual-Berke and Talcott.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 5 members: Representatives Alexander, Benson, Boldt, Clements and Cox.

Staff: Denise Graham (786-7137).

Background:

By law, Washington's public school students must take standardized tests in a number of different subjects at various points in the students' educational careers. During elementary, middle school, and high school, the students are tested to determine whether they are meeting the state's learning standards for students at those grade levels. Tests in reading, writing, mathematics, and listening have already been developed and administered on either a voluntary or required basis for students in the fourth, seventh and 10th grades. By this spring, most students in those three grades must be tested in those subjects. In the future, students in elementary, middle school, and high school will also be tested in science, social studies, the arts, and health and fitness.

The science assessment at the middle and high school levels is required to be administered in the 2000-01 school year. However, after piloting the science assessments, the Superintendent of Public Instruction determined that the science assessments do not have the appropriate technical rigor and recommended delaying implementation.

The timelines for the voluntary and required administration of all the tests are determined by law. The tests will be used to ascertain whether the schools that the students attend are helping the students to meet the state's learning standards, also called the essential academic learning requirements. The tests will also be used to determine whether students are allowed to graduate from a public high school. Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, students will receive a certificate of mastery upon successful completion of the high school assessments. A certificate of mastery will be required for graduation from a public high school.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The statutory timelines are revised for the voluntary and required administration of the science, social studies, and arts assessments of student learning.

The voluntary and required administration of the high school science assessment are delayed for three years. The assessment must be available for voluntary use in the 2002-03 school year and for required use in the 2003-04 school year. The voluntary administration of the middle school science assessment is delayed two year, from the 1999-00 school year to the 2001-02 school year. The required administration of the middle school assessment is also delayed two years, from the 2000-01 school year to the 2002-03 school year. The voluntary use of the elementary school science assessment is delayed by two school years from 2001-02 to 2003-04. The first required administration of the elementary school science assessment is delayed two schools years from 2004-05 to 2006-07.

The timelines for the administration of the social studies assessment are dealt with as follows: The voluntary administration of the high school assessment is unchanged at the 2002-03 school year, but the required administration is moved up one year from the 2005-06 school year to the 2004-05 school year; the voluntary use of the middle school assessment is delayed one school year from 2002-03 to 2003-04, while the required use remains unchanged at the 2005-06 school year; and the voluntary use of the elementary assessment is delayed two school years from 2002-03 to 2004-05, while the required use is delayed one school year from 2005-06 to 2006-07.

The voluntary administration of the high school arts assessment remains unchanged from the 2003-04 school year, but the required administration in high school is moved up one year, from 2006-07 to 2005-06. The voluntary administration of the middle school arts assessment is delayed one school year from 2003-04 to 2004-05 and the required administration remains at 2006-07. The voluntary administration of the elementary school arts assessment is delayed two school years from 2003-04 to 2005-06 and the required administration remains the same at 2007-08.

Prior to 2008, students who pass the high school assessments receive an endorsement on their high school transcripts. The high school social studies assessment shall not be administered before the eleventh grade.

References to "certificate of mastery" are deleted and replaced with "successful completion of the high school assessments."

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), in consultation with a representative of the Governor, the Chairs and ranking minority members of the education committees of the Legislature, and other interested stakeholders, must review the statutory timeliness for the arts, fitness and health assessments and make recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by November 1, 2001.

Amended Bill Compared to Engrossed Bill:

The amended bill adds the requirement that OSPI review and make recommendations on the timelines for the arts, fitness and health assessments. The amended bill adds the provisions that delete references to "certificate of mastery."

The amended bill makes no changes to the health and fitness assessment timelines, while the engrossed bill delays the voluntary and required administration of the health and fitness assessment by two years.

The engrossed bill delays the voluntary administration of the middle and high school science assessment by two years and the required administration by three years. The engrossed bill delays the voluntary administration of the elementary school science assessment by one year.

The engrossed bill delays the voluntary and required administration of all social studies, and arts assessments by two years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not Requested.

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

Testimony For: (with concerns) Folks in the field and program people don't want to put off the assessments for arts and health and fitness too far. It is preferable, though, to push the science assessments out a few years. The issue is not savings, but readiness in the field. The goal is to get to the 2008 graduation requirements successfully.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Greg Williamson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.