
SENATE BILL 6023

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe and Rasmussen

Read first time 02/14/2007. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to alternative assessments; amending RCW
2 28A.655.061 and 28A.655.100; adding new sections to chapter 28A.655
3 RCW; providing expiration dates; and declaring an emergency.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2006 c 115 s 4 are each amended to
6 read as follows:

7 (1) The high school assessment system shall include but need not be
8 limited to the Washington assessment of student learning, opportunities
9 for a student to retake the content areas of the assessment in which
10 the student was not successful, and if approved by the legislature
11 pursuant to subsection (10) of this section, one or more objective
12 alternative assessments for a student to demonstrate achievement of
13 state academic standards. The objective alternative assessments for
14 each content area shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and
15 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington
16 assessment of student learning for each content area.

17 (2) Subject to the conditions in this section, a certificate of
18 academic achievement shall be obtained by most students at about the
19 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the students have successfully met

1 the state standard in the content areas included in the certificate.
2 With the exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW
3 28A.155.045, acquisition of the certificate is required for graduation
4 from a public high school but is not the only requirement for
5 graduation.

6 (3) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, with the exception
7 of students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045, a student who
8 meets the state standards on the reading, writing, and mathematics
9 content areas of the high school Washington assessment of student
10 learning shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. If a
11 student does not successfully meet the state standards in one or more
12 content areas required for the certificate of academic achievement,
13 then the student may retake the assessment in the content area up to
14 four times at no cost to the student. If the student successfully
15 meets the state standards on a retake of the assessment then the
16 student shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. Once
17 objective alternative assessments are authorized pursuant to subsection
18 (10) of this section, a student may use the objective alternative
19 assessments to demonstrate that the student successfully meets the
20 state standards for that content area if the student has retaken the
21 Washington assessment of student learning at least once, except as
22 allowed under subsection (10)(c) of this section. If the student
23 successfully meets the state standards on the objective alternative
24 assessments then the student shall earn a certificate of academic
25 achievement.

26 (4) Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, a student must
27 meet the state standards in science in addition to the other content
28 areas required under subsection (3) of this section on the Washington
29 assessment of student learning or the objective alternative assessments
30 in order to earn a certificate of academic achievement.

31 (5) The state board of education may not require the acquisition of
32 the certificate of academic achievement for students in home-based
33 instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW, for students enrolled in private
34 schools under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or for students satisfying the
35 provisions of RCW 28A.155.045.

36 (6) A student may retain and use the highest result from each
37 successfully completed content area of the high school assessment.

1 (7) Beginning in 2006, school districts must make available to
2 students the following options:

3 (a) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to
4 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the
5 state standards if the student is enrolled in a public school; or

6 (b) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to
7 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the
8 state standards if the student is enrolled in a high school completion
9 program at a community or technical college. The superintendent of
10 public instruction and the state board for community and technical
11 colleges shall jointly identify means by which students in these
12 programs can be assessed.

13 (8) Students who achieve the standard in a content area of the high
14 school assessment but who wish to improve their results shall pay for
15 retaking the assessment, using a uniform cost determined by the
16 superintendent of public instruction.

17 (9) Subject to available funding, the superintendent shall pilot
18 opportunities for retaking the high school assessment beginning in the
19 2004-05 school year. Beginning no later than September 2006,
20 opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year shall be
21 available to each school district.

22 (10)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
23 shall develop options for implementing objective alternative
24 assessments, which may include an appeals process, for students to
25 demonstrate achievement of the state academic standards. The objective
26 alternative assessments shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and
27 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington
28 assessment of student learning and be objective in its determination of
29 student achievement of the state standards. Before any objective
30 alternative assessments in addition to those authorized in RCW
31 28A.655.065 or (b) or (c) of this subsection are used by a student to
32 demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in a content
33 area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall formally
34 approve the use of any objective alternative assessments through the
35 omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent resolution.
36 Students meeting state standards by using the alternative assessment
37 options authorized in (c) of this subsection must also retake the
38 Washington assessment of student learning once after the tenth grade

1 assessment and before graduation in the content area in which he or she
2 did not meet standard on the tenth grade assessment. If a student
3 meets standard on this retake, the student need not complete the
4 remaining coursework as required by (c) of this subsection.

5 (b) A student's score on the mathematics portion of the preliminary
6 scholastic assessment test (PSAT), the scholastic assessment test
7 (SAT), or the American college test (ACT) may be used as an objective
8 alternative assessment under this section for demonstrating that a
9 student has met or exceeded the mathematics standards for the
10 certificate of academic achievement. The state board of education
11 shall identify the scores students must achieve on the mathematics
12 portion of the PSAT, SAT, or ACT to meet or exceed the state standard
13 for mathematics. The state board of education shall identify the first
14 scores by December 1, 2006, and thereafter may increase but not
15 decrease the scores required for students to meet or exceed the state
16 standard for mathematics.

17 (c) A student who has taken the Washington assessment of student
18 learning once but has not successfully met the state standards on one
19 or more content areas required for the certificate of academic
20 achievement may earn a certificate of academic achievement by
21 completing at least two semesters of additional coursework. In
22 determining what coursework and the amount of coursework that shall
23 count towards attaining the certificate of academic achievement, the
24 student and his or her parents or guardians shall meet with one of the
25 student's classroom instructors for the content area in which the
26 student failed to successfully meet standard and the student's guidance
27 counselor, advisor, or mentor to develop the student learning plan as
28 established in subsection (12) of this section and to develop the
29 student's high school and beyond plan as established by state board of
30 education rules. The following criteria shall be met in order for the
31 coursework to count towards attaining the certificate of academic
32 achievement;

33 (i) The coursework taken shall contribute to the student achieving
34 the competencies necessary to pursue the goals established in the
35 student's high school and beyond plan;

36 (ii) A student must obtain at least the equivalent of a C+ grade in
37 each of the courses taken;

1 (iii) The totality of the coursework must include instruction in
2 each of the competencies in which the student failed to meet standard
3 and the instructors and guidance counselor, advisor, or mentor shall
4 specifically consider and discuss with the student whether career and
5 technical education courses, online courses, or courses at skill
6 centers could be used to meet the coursework requirements; and

7 (iv) The student must maintain at least a seventy-five percent
8 attendance rate in each of the courses. The instructor for the course
9 may waive the attendance requirement for illness.

10 (11) By December 15, 2004, the house of representatives and senate
11 education committees shall obtain information and conclusions from
12 recognized, independent, national assessment experts regarding the
13 validity and reliability of the high school Washington assessment of
14 student learning for making individual student high school graduation
15 determinations.

16 (12) To help assure continued progress in academic achievement as
17 a foundation for high school graduation and to assure that students are
18 on track for high school graduation, each school district shall prepare
19 plans for students as provided in this subsection (12).

20 (a) Student learning plans are required for eighth through twelfth
21 grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content
22 areas of the Washington assessment for student learning during the
23 previous school year. The plan shall include the courses,
24 competencies, and other steps needed to be taken by the student to meet
25 state academic standards and stay on track for graduation. This
26 requirement shall be phased in as follows:

27 (i) Beginning no later than the 2004-05 school year ninth grade
28 students as described in this subsection (12)(a) shall have a plan.

29 (ii) Beginning no later than the 2005-06 school year and every year
30 thereafter eighth grade students as described in this subsection
31 (12)(a) shall have a plan.

32 (iii) The parent or guardian shall be notified, preferably through
33 a parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington
34 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to
35 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student
36 was unsuccessful, strategies to help them improve their student's
37 skills, and the content of the student's plan.

1 (iv) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported to the
2 student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments to the
3 plan made as necessary.

4 (b) Beginning with the 2005-06 school year and every year
5 thereafter, all fifth grade students who were not successful in one or
6 more of the content areas of the fourth grade Washington assessment of
7 student learning shall have a student learning plan.

8 (i) The parent or guardian of a student described in this
9 subsection (12)(b) shall be notified, preferably through a parent
10 conference, of the student's results on the Washington assessment of
11 student learning, actions the school intends to take to improve the
12 student's skills in any content area in which the student was
13 unsuccessful, and provide strategies to help them improve their
14 student's skills.

15 (ii) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported to the
16 student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments to the
17 plan made as necessary.

18 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.655.100 and 1999 c 388 s 302 are each amended to
19 read as follows:

20 Each school district board of directors shall:

21 (1)(a) Annually report to parents and to the community in a public
22 meeting and annually report in writing the following information:

23 (i) District-wide and school-level performance improvement goals
24 including the three-year increase goals established in subsections (3)
25 and (4) of this section;

26 (ii) Student performance relative to the goals; and

27 (iii) District-wide and school-level plans to achieve the goals,
28 including curriculum and instruction, parental or guardian involvement,
29 and resources available to parents and guardians to help students meet
30 the state standards;

31 (b) Report annually in a news release to the local media the
32 district's progress toward meeting the district-wide and school-level
33 goals; and

34 (c) Include the school-level goals, student performance relative to
35 the goals, and a summary of school-level plans to achieve the goals in
36 each school's annual school performance report under RCW 28A.655.110.

1 (2) School districts in which ten or fewer students in the district
2 or in a school in the district are eligible to be assessed in a grade
3 level are not required to report numerical improvement goals and
4 performance relative to the goals, but are required to report to
5 parents and the community their plans to improve student achievement.

6 (3) Beginning with the 2006-07 school year and through the 2011-12
7 school year, and in accordance with the accountability plan established
8 by the state board of education under the authority of section 3 of
9 this act, shall establish a three-year goal to increase the number of
10 students who obtain a certificate of academic achievement or
11 certificate of individual achievement and graduate in the 2009-10
12 school year and the yearly benchmarks to determine what progress is
13 being made.

14 (4) Beginning with the 2006-07 school year and through the 2011-12
15 school year, and in accordance with the accountability plan established
16 by the state board of education under the authority of section 3 of
17 this act, each school district shall direct each high school within the
18 district to establish a three-year increase goal and yearly benchmarks.

19 NEW SECTION. Sec. 3. A new section is added to chapter 28A.655
20 RCW to read as follows:

21 (1) The state board of education shall develop an accountability
22 plan for use by schools and school districts in meeting the
23 requirements of RCW 28A.655.100 (3) and (4) and shall develop and
24 implement accountability measures for school districts and schools that
25 do not meet the yearly progress benchmarks and the three-year increase
26 goals. In developing accountability measures, the state board of
27 education shall consider a range of intervention strategies for schools
28 including, but not limited to, mandatory participation in the school
29 improvement focused assistance program. The intervention strategies
30 developed under this section shall be deemed to be authorized for the
31 purposes of RCW 28A.305.130(4)(d).

32 (2) This section expires December 31, 2012.

33 NEW SECTION. Sec. 4. A new section is added to chapter 28A.655
34 RCW to read as follows:

35 (1) The Washington state institute for public policy shall review
36 the alternative assessment created in RCW 28A.655.061(10)(c) for

1 effectiveness in helping students who choose this alternative to
2 increase achievement on the Washington assessment of student learning,
3 graduate on time from high school, and, to the extent information is
4 available, pursue a college or career pathway of their choice. The
5 institute for public policy shall issue an initial report to the
6 education committees of the legislature in December 2010, and a second
7 report in December 2012.

8 (2) This section expires December 31, 2012.

9 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 5.** This act is necessary for the immediate
10 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
11 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
12 immediately.

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