
SENATE BILL 6540

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen, Swecker, Pridemore, McAuliffe, Jacobsen, Hargrove, and Fairley

Read first time 01/17/08. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the reading and writing content areas of the
2 Washington assessment of student learning; reenacting and amending RCW
3 28A.655.061; and declaring an emergency.

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

5 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2007 c 355 s 5 and 2007 c 354 s 2 are
6 each reenacted and amended to 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 Beginning with the graduating class of 2012, with the exception of
3 students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045 ((~~or~~)) and in
4 accordance with the requirements of RCW 28A.655.0611, acquisition of
5 the certificate is required for graduation from a public high school
6 but is not the only requirement for graduation.

7 (3)(a) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, with the
8 exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045, a
9 student who meets the state standards on the reading, writing, and
10 mathematics content areas of the high school Washington assessment of
11 student learning shall earn a certificate of academic achievement.

12 (b) If a student does not successfully meet the state standards in
13 one or more content areas required for the certificate of academic
14 achievement, then the student may retake the assessment in the content
15 area up to four times at no cost to the student. If the student
16 successfully meets the state standards on a retake of the assessment
17 then the student shall earn a certificate of academic achievement.

18 (c) Once objective alternative assessments are authorized pursuant
19 to subsection (10) of this section, a student may use the objective
20 alternative assessments to demonstrate that the student successfully
21 meets the state standards for that content area if the student has
22 taken the Washington assessment of student learning at least once. If
23 the student successfully meets the state standards on the objective
24 alternative assessments then the student shall earn a certificate of
25 academic achievement.

26 (4) Beginning no later than with the graduating class of 2013, a
27 student must meet the state standards in science in addition to the
28 other content areas required under subsection (3) of this section on
29 the Washington assessment of student learning or the objective
30 alternative assessments in order to earn a certificate of academic
31 achievement. The state board of education may adopt a rule that
32 implements the requirements of this subsection (4) beginning with a
33 graduating class before the graduating class of 2013, if the state
34 board of education adopts the rule by September 1st of the freshman
35 school year of the graduating class to which the requirements of this
36 subsection (4) apply. The state board of education's authority under
37 this subsection (4) does not alter the requirement that any change in

1 performance standards for the tenth grade assessment must comply with
2 RCW 28A.305.130.

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

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

10 (7) School districts must make available to students the following
11 options:

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

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

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

26 (9) Opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year
27 shall be available to each school district.

28 (10)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
29 shall develop options for implementing objective alternative
30 assessments, which may include an appeals process for students' scores,
31 for students to demonstrate achievement of the state academic
32 standards. The objective alternative assessments shall be comparable
33 in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate
34 on the Washington assessment of student learning and be objective in
35 its determination of student achievement of the state standards.
36 Before any objective alternative assessments in addition to those
37 authorized in RCW 28A.655.065 or (b) of this subsection are used by a
38 student to demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in

1 a content area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall
2 formally approve the use of any objective alternative assessments
3 through the omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent
4 resolution.

5 (b)(i) A student's score on the mathematics, reading or English, or
6 writing portion of the scholastic assessment test (SAT) or the American
7 college test (ACT) may be used as an objective alternative assessment
8 under this section for demonstrating that a student has met or exceeded
9 the state standards for the certificate of academic achievement. The
10 state board of education shall identify the scores students must
11 achieve on the relevant portion of the SAT or ACT to meet or exceed the
12 state standard in the relevant content area on the Washington
13 assessment of student learning. The state board of education shall
14 identify the first scores by December 1, 2007. After the first scores
15 are established, the state board may increase but not decrease the
16 scores required for students to meet or exceed the state standards.

17 (ii) Until August 31, 2008, a student's score on the mathematics
18 portion of the preliminary scholastic assessment test (PSAT) may be
19 used as an objective alternative assessment under this section for
20 demonstrating that a student has met or exceeded the state standard for
21 the certificate of academic achievement. The state board of education
22 shall identify the score students must achieve on the mathematics
23 portion of the PSAT to meet or exceed the state standard in that
24 content area on the Washington assessment of student learning.

25 (iii) A student who scores at least a three on the grading scale of
26 one to five for selected (~~(advance placement)~~) AP examinations may use
27 the score as an objective alternative assessment under this section for
28 demonstrating that a student has met or exceeded state standards for
29 the certificate of academic achievement. A score of three on the
30 (~~(advance placement)~~) AP examinations in calculus or statistics may be
31 used as an alternative assessment for the mathematics portion of the
32 Washington assessment of student learning. A score of three on the
33 (~~(advance placement)~~) AP examinations in English language and
34 composition may be used as an alternative assessment for the writing
35 portion of the Washington assessment of student learning. A score of
36 three on the (~~(advance placement)~~) AP examinations in English
37 literature and composition, macroeconomics, microeconomics, psychology,
38 United States history, world history, United States government and

1 politics, or comparative government and politics may be used as an
2 alternative assessment for the reading portion of the Washington
3 assessment of student learning.

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

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

14 (a) Student learning plans are required for eighth through twelfth
15 grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content
16 areas of the Washington assessment for student learning during the
17 previous school year. The plan shall include the courses,
18 competencies, and other steps needed to be taken by the student to meet
19 state academic standards and stay on track for graduation. If
20 applicable, the plan shall also include the high school completion
21 pilot program created under RCW 28B.50.534.

22 (i) The parent or guardian shall be notified, preferably through a
23 parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington
24 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to
25 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student
26 was unsuccessful, strategies to help them improve their student's
27 skills, and the content of the student's plan.

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

31 (b) All fifth grade students who were not successful in one or more
32 of the content areas of the fourth grade Washington assessment of
33 student learning shall have a student learning plan.

34 (i) The parent or guardian of the student shall be notified,
35 preferably through a parent conference, of the student's results on the
36 Washington assessment of student learning, actions the school intends
37 to take to improve the student's skills in any content area in which

1 the student was unsuccessful, and provide strategies to help them
2 improve their student's skills.

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

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** This act is necessary for the immediate
7 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
8 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
9 immediately.

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