

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## HB 1330

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to high school assessments as graduation requirements.

**Brief Description:** Adjusting high school assessments as graduation requirements.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Rolfes, Sells, Liias, Haigh, Probst, Van De Wege and Tharinger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 2/1/11, 2/17/11 [DPS].

**Brief Summary of Substitute Bill**

- Allows students in the graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 to meet the state standard in high school mathematics for purposes of graduation using the results from one end-of-course assessment rather than two.

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### HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 21 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Lytton, Vice Chair; Dammeier, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Ahern, Angel, Billig, Dahlquist, Fagan, Finn, Haigh, Hargrove, Hunt, Klippert, Kretz, Ladenburg, Liias, Maxwell, McCoy, Probst and Wilcox.

**Staff:** Barbara McLain (786-7383).

**Background:**

In 2008 the Legislature directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to replace the comprehensive state high school mathematics assessment with a series of end-of-course assessments (EOCs) beginning in the 2009-10 school year. The law currently states that the EOCs are to be developed to cover standards for first-year mathematics (Algebra I and Integrated I) and also second-year mathematics (Geometry and Integrated II). For purposes of high school graduation, students in the graduating class of 2013 and 2014 are permitted to

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use the results of the EOC for the first year of mathematics plus the EOC for the second year of mathematics, or the results from a comprehensive mathematics assessment. Starting with the class of 2015, only the EOCs will be used as the state high school mathematics assessment. Students must meet the state standard on both mathematics EOCs to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA), which is required for graduation starting with the class of 2013.

The comprehensive mathematics assessment was offered to students in the 10th grade. The EOCs are designed to be offered to students after they take the respective mathematics course. The SPI estimates that approximately 60,000 grade students in the class of 2013 took Algebra I or Integrated I as freshmen and are now enrolled in Geometry or Integrated II. Some took the first year of high school mathematics in eighth grade. This class will be expected to take two mathematics EOCs in the spring of 2010 in order to meet graduation requirements. A comprehensive high school mathematics assessment is no longer being offered.

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**Summary of Substitute Bill:**

Students in the graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 must meet the state standard on one end-of-course (EOC) high school mathematics assessment rather than two in order to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA), which is required for graduation. The option for these students to use results from a comprehensive mathematics assessment is replaced by an option to use results from a retake assessment. It is clarified that students, beginning with the class of 2015, have the option to meet the state standard on both EOC high school mathematics assessments or use results from one or more retake assessments to earn a CAA.

**Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The original bill made the CAA a requirement for high school graduation beginning with the class of 2016 rather than 2013; continued a policy that allows students who do not meet the state standard on the high school mathematics assessment to graduate if they take additional mathematics courses; and added science to the list of assessments required for a CAA beginning with the class of 2016 rather than 2013. The substitute bill allows students in the classes of 2013 and 2014 to meet the state standard in mathematics by using one, rather than two, EOCs.

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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available. New fiscal note requested on February 17, 2011.

**Effective Date of Substitute Bill:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill postpones but does not eliminate state testing requirements. It is brought forward because the Legislature has done the unthinkable to take money from school districts that had been set aside for math, science, curriculum, counseling, and paraeducators. The Legislature cannot pretend that students will not be impacted by massive cuts; and they cannot pretend that these assessments requirements are not an unfunded mandate.

Faced with budget cuts, school districts will have to cut extended learning and remediation programs. Unless something is done, students will be held to a high standard that cannot be met. Only two years ago, a teacher received an award for helping struggling students achieve success in mathematics and science. Now budget cuts have taken away classroom aides and made the class sizes larger. Students are not getting the assistance and support they need and deserve. The state needs to focus on spending resources where they have the most significant impact on student learning.

The real discussion is about whether the state can afford to continue the graduation requirements. School boards have to make difficult choices. The concern is that when terrible cuts have to be made, how will they affect the classroom? Expansion of the state assessment system cannot come at the expense of classroom staff.

(Neutral) Research shows that students do not fail schools; schools fail them. When students get to college, they take remedial classes and do not complete degrees. Sixty percent of Washington students attend schools in the bottom two tiers of the state accountability index. Schools need to do their jobs better and stop rationalizations. School administrators support high standards, assessments, and graduation requirements. School directors do not have a formal position, but want testing to be both rigorous and fair.

(Opposed) This undermines what educators have been working on for the education system. Teachers have to stand in front of teenagers and say that the test does not count for them, but it does count against the school for accountability purposes. Expecting teenagers to take a test they do not care about simply does not work. The state keeps sending the same message: students who are not doing well enough to pass the test will not be required to pass it. High school students think high school is a joke. It is all about friends and sports. The state must establish standards and insist on them being met. Delaying is not helping students in any way. It only serves to help students fall further behind their peers in other states and the rest of the world.

It is sad that another generation could grow up less educated than their parents. The state needs to step up science, technology, engineering, and mathematics investments in education. What gets measured gets done; now is not the time to retreat. This is yet another time when the Legislature is considering delaying graduation requirements. The state should be focused on making sure students are ready to pass the tests rather than delay the tests.

The last time requirements were delayed, the reason was to fix the system. Delaying will not fix the system; it has not happened yet. Rather, the requirements should be continued in order to fix the system. The State Board of Education does not want to eliminate or delay requirements in mathematics and science. For science, a comprehensive plan is needed to address the disconnect between the importance of science in the state's economy but not in the education system. Delay is not such a plan. The state needs to hold the line on 2013 for

science. This continues to kick the can down the road. Washington trails other states in student preparation. The burden of low expectations falls hardest on poor students and students of color. Students have to be expected to graduate with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

**Persons Testifying:** (In support) Representative Rolfes, prime sponsor; Shannon Rasmussen and Christyna Paris, Washington Education Association; Christine Fraser, North Kitsap School District; and Jon Bridge, Sequim School Board.

(Neutral) Liv Finne, Washington Policy Center; Dan Steele, Washington Association of School Administration; and Marie Sullivan, Washington State School Directors' Association.

(Opposed) Scott Seaman, Tumwater High School; Charles Hoff; Jim Grossnickle; Anne Moore; Brad Burnham, Washington State Board of Education; Heather Cope, League of Education Voters; Anne Luce, Partnership for Learning; Chad Magendanz, Issaquah School Board; Lew McMurrin, Washington Technology Industry Association; Ramona Hattendorf, Washington Student Parent Teacher Association; and Kevin Washington, Excellent Schools Now.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.