

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5639

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As Passed Senate, March 2, 2017

**Title:** An act relating to alternative student assessments.

**Brief Description:** Concerning alternative student assessments.

**Sponsors:** Senators Conway and Zeiger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/14/17, 2/16/17 [DP, DNP].

**Floor Activity:**

Passed Senate: 3/02/17, 48-1.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Permits students attending a technical high school on a technical college campus to use an approved alternative assessment to demonstrate that the student has met the state standard, without having to take the statewide assessment at least one time.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass.

Signed by Senators Zeiger, Chair; Fain, Vice Chair; Rolfes, Ranking Minority Member; Rivers and Warnick.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass.

Signed by Senator Mullet.

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** Most high school students must meet the state proficiency standard on the state's high school assessments or an approved alternative assessment in English language arts (ELA), mathematics, and science to graduate from high school. Approved alternative assessments include the following:

- *College Admission/Advance Placement (AP)/ International Baccalaureate (IB) Tests.*  
Students may use their ELA, mathematics, and science scores on the Scholastic

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Assessment Test (SAT) or the American College Testing (ACT), specified AP examinations, or IB examinations, to show they have met the state proficiency standard.

- *Grade Point Average (GPA) Comparison.* A student's grades in courses corresponding to specific content areas are compared with the grades of students who took the same courses and passed the state assessments. This option is available to students in their 12th grade year who have an overall GPA of 3.2.
- *Collection of Evidence (COE).* The COE is an evaluation of a set of work samples prepared by the student in a classroom environment with instructional support from a teacher.

Before accessing an approved alternative assessment a student must take the state assessment at least once.

Students from various school districts attend technical high schools on a technical college campus. These students attend high school and college courses simultaneously. Enrollment in the technical high school is pursuant to an interlocal agreement with a school district. There are three technical high schools on the campuses of technical colleges that participate in this program:

- Lake Washington Technical Academy at Lake Washington Institute of Technology;
- Northwest Career and Technical High School at Clover Park Technical College; and
- Technical High School at Bates Technical College.

**Summary of Bill:** Students who meet specified criteria who attend a technical high school on a technical college campus may use an approved alternative assessment to demonstrate that the student has met the state proficiency standard, without having to take the statewide assessment at least one time. The student must meet the following criteria:

- be enrolled in a school district with which a technical college has a signed interlocal agreement on file with the Superintendent of Public Instruction;
- be under 21 years of age at the beginning of the school year;
- be enrolled tuition-free;
- be enrolled in the school district for the purpose of earning a high school diploma or certificate; and
- have actually participated in instructional activity at the technical college during the current school year.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members:** No.

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

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:** PRO: There are about 800 students that attend the three technical high schools at three technical colleges. Technical high schools are an alternative, non-traditional career pathway serving students who were not successful in traditional high schools. These students are getting a career and technical education that is

offered through a partnership with a school district and the technical college. The students are simultaneously working on getting a high school diploma and an associate degree or an industry-recognized certification. Their classes are taught by college faculty and are not aligned with the Common Core State Standards like other high schools' courses and the state assessments. Therefore, the state test is not an accurate reflection of the education and training that our students are receiving. There are already established alternative assessments to the state assessments but to access the alternatives a student must first fail the state assessment, which is administered in the 11th grade. The technical high schools do not admit students until the 11th grade. It is difficult for these students to return to their home high schools to take the 11th grade state assessment and the technical colleges are not prepared to administer the high school state assessments.

For these reasons, we think a narrowly-tailored exception should be made to allow these students to access the alternative assessments without first taking the state assessment.

CON: The State Board generally supports policies to provide additional pathways for students pursuing career and technical education and streamlining the state assessment system. The Board is currently working with others on the state plan to implement the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, and the state's accountability system. The underpinning of the accountability system that each student takes the state assessment at least once is important because of the value of the information that the state gets from the assessment results; and for the results to be valid, there needs to be a representative sample. There are several assessment issues coming up this year and this narrowly-tailored exception is difficult to resolve until those larger assessment issues are resolved. Students can take the state assessments in the 10th grade and that may help to resolve the issues raised today regarding the 11th grade students at the technical high schools.

**Persons Testifying:** PRO: Senator Steve Conway, Prime Sponsor; David Chappell, High School Program, Principal, Bates Technical College; Kim Infinger, High School Program Director, Lake Washington Institute of Technology.

CON: Ben Rarick, SBE.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** No one.