

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2695

As Reported By House Committee On:
Education

Title: An act relating to modifying the timelines for the development and implementation of the student assessment system.

Brief Description: Changing the timelines for development and implementation of the student assessment system.

Sponsors: Representatives Brumsickle and B. Thomas; by request of Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring, Board of Education and Commission on Student Learning.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/25/96, 2/1/96 [DPS].

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 10 members: Representatives Brumsickle, Chairman; Elliot, Vice Chairman; Johnson, Vice Chairman; Clements; Fuhrman; McMahan; Pelesky; Smith; Talcott and Thompson.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Cole, Ranking Minority Member; Keiser, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hatfield; Linville; Poulsen; Quall; Radcliff; B. Thomas and Veloria.

Staff: Robert Butts (786-7111).

Background: The Commission on Student Learning was created by the Legislature in 1992 to identify the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do, to develop student assessment and school accountability systems, and to take other steps necessary to improve student learning in the state.

Current law requires that the assessments being developed by the commission for all grade levels be available for reading, writing, communication, and mathematics for voluntary use by school districts in the 1996-97 school year, unless the Legislature takes action to prevent or delay implementation of the assessments. The assessments

for science, history, geography, civics, art, health, and fitness are to be available for voluntary use in the 1997-98 school year. School districts are required to use the assessments beginning in the 2000-2001 school year.

Summary of Substitute Bill: The timeline for the voluntary implementation of the assessments being developed by the Commission on Student Learning is modified.

Goal 1 and Mathematics: The initial voluntary implementation of these assessments in the elementary grades is not changed from the 1996-97 school year. The assessments for the middle grades are postponed one school year, from the 1996-97 school year until the 1997-98 school year. The assessments for the high school grades are postponed two years, from the 1996-97 school year until the 1998-99 school year.

Elementary Assessments in Science, Civics, History, Geography, Arts, Health, and Fitness: There is no state-level assessment in the elementary grades in science, civics, history, geography, arts, health, and fitness. The commission is required to develop classroom-based assessments in these areas that districts may choose to use.

Middle and High School Assessments in Science, Civics, History, Geography, Arts, Health, and Fitness: The state-level science assessments for the middle and high school grades will still be available in 1998-99. The state-level civics, geography, and history assessments in middle and high school are required to be available in the 1999-2000 school year, which is a one-year postponement. These state-level assessments shall not be required to be used by school districts until the Legislature adopts legislation making the assessments mandatory.

State-level assessments in the arts, health, and fitness will not be developed in the middle or high school grades. The commission must develop classroom-based assessments.

Review of state-level assessments: The State Board of Education, by December 1, 2001, must review whether state-level assessments should be added in the elementary, middle, and secondary grades.

Integration of Goal 3 and 4 assessments: The assessments for the Goal 3 (thinking skills) and Goal 4 (work skills) are to be integrated into the Goal 1 and 2 assessments.

Certificate of Mastery: The use of the certificate of mastery as a graduation requirement must be reviewed by the commission, and the State Board of Education. Other options must be explored. A report must be submitted to the Legislature by December 1996. The certificate may not be a graduation requirement until the Legislature adopts legislation making it a requirement.

Authority of the Commission: The commission may modify the essential academic learning requirements before it expires in June 1999. Changes are made regarding when the Commission on Student Learning is to transfer the assessment system to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring: The deadline for the Joint Select Committee on Education Restructuring to review school district data reporting requirements is extended to January 1997.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: In addition to changing the timelines for the completion of the Goal 1 and mathematics assessments, the deadline for the secondary assessments is changed, a review of the certificate of mastery is required, the use of the certificate of mastery as a graduation requirement and the required use of the Goal 2 assessments cannot occur until the Legislature acts, the commission is given authority to modify the learning requirements, and the due date for the report on data is extended.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 1996.

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

Testimony For: (Original bill) It is more important that we do the assessments correctly, rather than quickly. The schedule proposed in the bill will allow school districts to phase in the assessments starting with the early grades.

Testimony Against: (Original bill) None.

Testified: Terry Bergesen and Gordon Ensign, Commission on Student Learning; Gary Gainer, State Board of Education; and John Traynor, Gonzaga Prep.