

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 1987

As Amended by the Senate

Title: An act relating to alternative assessments.

Brief Description: Regarding alternative assessments.

Sponsors: By House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Priest, Ormsby, Curtis and Anderson).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/21/05, 3/1/05 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/10/05, 95-0.

Senate Amended.

Passed Senate: 4/12/05, 46-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to examine a career and technical alternative to the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 11 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; P. Sullivan, Vice Chair; Talcott, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Curtis, Haigh, Hunter, McDermott, Santos, Shabro and Tom.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

By law, beginning with the class of 2008, most public school students will be required to meet state standards in reading, writing, and mathematics in order to graduate. The students may meet this requirement by either passing the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in those content areas or by successful completion of an alternative assessment approved by the Legislature.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

By January 15, 2006, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) will conduct a review of the course requirements and assessments that lead to industry certification in two or more career and technical certification programs. The purpose of the review is to determine the extent to which they are aligned with the high school WASL. The review will also evaluate the statewide availability and utilization of the certifications. Based on the review, the OSPI is to determine if the certifications should be used as alternatives to the WASL for the purposes of high school graduation. The OSPI will also develop a process for evaluating other industry certification programs to determine whether they can be used as assessment alternatives.

EFFECT OF SENATE AMENDMENT(S):

Adds language that:

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction to pilot two or more alternative assessments during the 2005-06 school year and to develop an appeals process no later than the 2007-08 school year.
- Removes the requirement for legislative approval of alternative assessments and any appeals process.
- Requires high schools to notify students and parents, in the primary language of the parents to the extent practicable, of a student's options under the high school assessment system and of the different courses and programs in career and technical education, including those available in skill centers.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: (In support of original bill) The legislation creates a pilot to see whether the state can use industry certification in certain career and technical fields, in lieu of the WASL, as a graduation requirement. Students learn in many different ways, and for some, the applied and hands-on learning in career and technical programs is the best instructional approach. The alternative is intended to be of high-quality and of comparable rigor to the WASL. The alternative also meets more than one of the original goals of education reform because it is performance-based and connected to the world of work. Students who are right out of high school and who meet automotive industry certification can make between \$60,000 and \$80,000 a year. Access to programs of this kind help keep students in school and can provide course work that is equivalent to that found in college.

(With concerns on original bill) Students should take the WASL twice before they use an alternative means to the WASL. Any alternative must be as rigorous as the WASL.

Testimony Against: None.

Persons Testifying: (In support of original bill) Representative Priest, prime sponsor; Representative Ormsby; Tom Murphy, Nancy Hawkins, and Karen Dickenson, Federal Way Public Schools; Dennis Wallace, Yelm Community Schools and Washington Association of Vocational Administrators; Kathleen Lopp and Doug Meyer, Washington Association for Career and Technical Educators; Christie Perkins, Washington State Special Education Coalition; and Don Rash, Association of Washington School Principals.

(With concerns on original bill) Susan Mielke, Washington Roundtable; Nancy Atwood, AeA; Wes Pruitt Workforce and Education Coordinating Board; Robert Butts, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Gary King, Washington Education Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.