

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESHB 2224

As of Second Reading

Title: An act relating to providing flexibility in high school graduation requirements and supporting student success during the transition to a federal every student succeeds act-compliant accountability system.

Brief Description: Providing flexibility in high school graduation requirements and supporting student success during the transition to a federal every student succeeds act-compliant accountability system.

Sponsors: House Committee on Education (originally sponsored by Representatives MacEwen, Dolan, Appleton, Haler, Harris, Sells, Tarleton, J. Walsh, Santos and Doglio; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

Brief History: Passed House: 6/27/17, 94-0.

Committee Activity:

Brief Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill

- Requires the state assessments in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics to be administered in the tenth-grade beginning with the high school Class of 2020.
- Directs the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to establish the score to determine career and college readiness, which may be different from the score required for high school graduation.
- Eliminates the Collection of Evidence as an alternative for a student to use to meet the state standard on the statewide assessments and graduate from high school.
- Adds two alternatives for a student to use to meet the state standard on the assessments and graduate from high school: successfully complete a dual credit course; and use a score on a SPI-approved school district administered assessment, which could be a transition course assessment that meets specified criteria.
- Creates an expedited appeals process for students in graduating Classes of 2014 through 2018 who did not meet the state standard on the ELA and mathematics state assessments.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

- Specifies minimum elements for the High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) and requires the HSBP to be initiated in seventh or eighth-grade.
- Requires school districts to update the HSBP for ninth-grade students who did not pass the middle school mathematics assessment to ensure that the student takes one or more mathematics credits in both ninth and tenth-grades.
- School districts must provide 11th-graders the opportunity to access interventions, supports, and courses to enable the student to meet the high school graduation standard.

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Background: Federal High School Assessment Requirements. Under federal law, states must assess student achievement on the English language arts, mathematics, and science state essential academic learning requirements (EALRs) at least once in the high school grades.

Washington State High School Assessment Requirements. Since 2008, Washington's minimum high school graduation requirements have included a requirement that most students must meet the state standard on the statewide assessments in reading and writing, or English language arts (ELA), and mathematics to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA). Washington is currently transitioning to an 11th-grade assessment in ELA and mathematics.

Meeting the state standard on the state science assessment was scheduled to become a CAA and graduation requirement for the graduating Class of 2015; however, the Legislature acted in 2015 to delay adding the science assessment as a graduation requirement. Current law requires the graduating Class of 2017 to meet the state standard on the state science assessment. The state science assessment is an end-of-course (EOC) biology assessment. The biology EOC assessment is based on Washington's 2009 science EALRs. Washington adopted new science EALRs in 2013. A new comprehensive science assessment of the 2013 science learning standards will be administered for the first time in spring 2018.

The State Board of Education (SBE) identifies the score a student must achieve on the state assessments to meet the state standard on the state assessments and earn a CAA.

Alternative State Assessments. The Ninth Circuit federal court found that when a state requires students to meet the state standard on a state assessment as a high school graduation requirement then the state must also provide alternative ways for students to demonstrate they have met the state standard if the student fails to meet the state standard on the state assessment.

In Washington, high school students must take the state assessment at least once before accessing an alternative. The alternatives must be comparable in rigor to the state assessments. School districts must provide the following legislatively-approved alternative

assessments for a student to earn a CAA if the student did not meet the state standard on the state assessments:

- Collection of Evidence (COE)—a state evaluation of academic work samples prepared by the student with instructional support from a teacher;
- Grade Point Average (GPA) comparison—the grades of a student in their 12th-grade year who has an overall GPA of 3.2 but did not meet the state standard on the state assessment are compared with the grades of students who took the same courses and met the state standard on the state assessment; and
- College Admission/AP/IB Tests—students may use their ELA and mathematics scores on the SAT; their ELA, mathematics, and science scores on the ACT; scores on specified Advanced Placement (AP) exams; and scores on the International Baccalaureate (IB) exams.

Dual Credit Programs. The Dual Credit programs allow students to take college-level courses while still in high school. Students may become eligible for the awarding of college credit based on scores obtained in the year-end examinations and through taking college-level classes either in their high school or at colleges and universities.

Appeals. Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) rules allow a student to challenge to the technical aspect of a score. Additionally, under SPI rules, the CAA requirement may be waived for students who:

- transfer from another state in the eleventh or twelfth-grade; or
- have special, unavoidable circumstances, as defined in rule, including death of a parent, sibling or grandparent, and an unexpected and/or severe medical condition.

High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP). Since 2009, the HSBP has been a high school graduation requirement. Starting in middle schools, students create a HSBP for their high school experience, including what they expect to do the year following graduation. Each school district determines the guidelines for the HSBP and whether the student has met this graduation requirement. If a student successfully completes career and technical education (CTE) courses needed for industry certification, college credit, or pre-apprenticeship, then the certificate must be part of the student's HSBP.

CTE Equivalencies. In 2014, the Legislature directed the SPI to develop curriculum frameworks for CTE courses with content in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics equivalent, in full or in part, to science or mathematics courses that meet high school graduation requirements. The course content must be aligned with the state essential academic learning requirements and industry standards. The SPI has created 37 CTE state-approved course equivalencies. School districts must provide the opportunity for high school students to access at least one science or mathematics CTE course on the SPI list.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: Washington State High School Assessment Requirements. The minimum high school graduation requirements to meet the state standard on the statewide assessments is maintained. Beginning with the high school graduating Class of 2020 the statewide assessments in ELA and mathematics will be administered at the tenth grade.

The use of the state science assessment as a graduation requirement is delayed until the high school graduating Class of 2021. This applies retroactively to the graduating Class of 2017. The comprehensive assessment used as the graduation requirement beginning with the graduating Class of 2021 must assess the science EALRs adopted by the SPI in 2013. The biology EOC assessment remains the state assessment until the comprehensive science assessment is required.

The SBE must still identify the scores students must achieve to meet the state standard on the state assessments. The SBE, in consultation with the SPI, by December 1, 2018, must also identify and report to the Governor and Legislature on the equivalent student performance standard that a tenth grade student would need to achieve on the state assessments to be on track to be career and college ready. Nothing prohibits the SBE from identifying a college and career readiness score that is different from the score required for high school graduation.

Alternative State Assessments. The COE is eliminated as an alternative assessment. The following alternative ways to meet the state standard required for high school graduation are added:

- completion of a dual credit course in ELA or mathematics in which the student earns college credit; or
- successful passage of a school district-administered assessment approved by the SPI.

The SPI develop a process by which school districts may submit assessments for the SPI to review and approve for use as objective alternative assessments for graduation. This process must establish a means to determine whether a school district-administered assessment is comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the statewide student assessment and is objective in its determination of student achievement of the minimum high school graduation standard. SPI must post on its website a list of approved district-administered assessments and the scores necessary to meet the standard on the assessment.

The assessments in ELA and mathematics used in transition courses are considered approved district-administered assessments. A transition course offered in high school, must be rigorous and consistent with the student's HSBP, and may include CTE equivalencies. Successful completion of a transition course ensures the student college-level placement at participating institutions of higher education, although it does not entitle student to be automatically admitted to any institution of higher education.

Appeals. An expedited appeals process is created for the high school graduating Classes of 2014 through 2018. The process is for students who have not met standard on the ELA or mathematics assessments or both. To be eligible to appeal the student must have met all other state and local graduation requirements. Additionally, the graduating Class of 2018, must have also attempted at least one of the approved alternative assessments before accessing the expedited appeals process. A student, parent, or a principal may initiate an appeal to the school district; then the district decides whether to apply to SPI for approval of the appeal. SPI approves the appeal if it is demonstrated that the student has the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the high school graduation standards. Pathways for demonstrating the necessary skills and knowledge may include, but are not limited to:

- successful completion of a college level class in the relevant subject area;

- admission to a higher education institution or career preparation program;
- award of a scholarship for higher education; or
- enlistment in a branch of the military.

High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP). Beginning in seventh or eighth grade, each student must have a HSBP. Students must take a career interest and skills inventory to use to identify career and education goals in the HSBP. The HSBP must also include a four-year plan for course-taking. By the 12th-grade a student's HSBP must include a resume or activity log. The HSBP must be updated to reflect changing interests, goals, and needs. Schools are encouraged to involve parents in the process of developing and updating the HSBP. The determination of whether a student has met this graduation requirement remains with the school district. A district may establish additional local requirements for the HSBP.

Course Taking Requirements. A school district must update the HSBP for each ninth grade student who did not pass the eighth grade mathematics to ensure that the student takes one or more credits of mathematics in both grades nine and ten.

For students not earning a CAA before the beginning of 11th-grade, school districts must provide the opportunity to access interventions, academic supports, and courses to enable students to meet the high school graduation standard. These must be rigorous and consistent with a student's HSBP, and may include CTE equivalencies.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on June 26, 2017.

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

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.