
Education Committee

HB 1720

Brief Description: Reducing state assessment requirements to only those required for federal purposes in order to facilitate removal of inequitable barriers to students.

Sponsors: Representatives Young and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Decouples graduation requirements from statewide high school assessments by discontinuing the Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA), the earning of which is currently required as proof that a student has successfully met standard on statewide assessments required for graduation.
- Discontinues the Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) for students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system.
- Makes numerous changes related to the discontinuation of the CAA and the CIA, including eliminating alternate assessments for students who have not met standard on statewide assessments.
- Preserves provisions requiring the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education to maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science.
- Applies to the graduating class of 2020 and subsequent graduating classes.

Hearing Date: 2/12/19

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Statewide Student Assessment System.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE), is authorized to maintain and revise a statewide academic assessment system to measure

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student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and to use it for purposes of state and federal accountability. The state assessment system must cover the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years.

Additionally, the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades 3 through 8 and one high school grade. The ESSA also requires states to assess students in science at least once in each of three grade spans: grades 3 through 5; grades 6 through 9; and grades 10 through 12.

The SBE is responsible for establishing the performance scores that students must meet on state assessments. The scores established for purposes of graduation may be different from the scores used for the purpose of determining career and college readiness.

High School Graduation Requirements.

A Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) is one of the requirements for graduation from a public high school. To obtain a CAA, a student must meet state standard on required statewide assessments administered in grade 10. Students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system, even with accommodations, may earn a CIA through a variety of ways to demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with their individual education programs.

Students in the graduating class of 2019 and in subsequent classes must meet the state standard on the English Language Arts (ELA) SBAC and mathematics assessments. (Washington is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, known as the SBAC, a multistate consortium that developed student assessment in ELA and mathematics.) Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, graduating students must also meet the science standard on the Next Generation Science Standards assessment.

Objective Alternative Assessment Options.

Objective alternative assessment options (alternative assessments) may be utilized by students who have taken an assessment at least once. The alternative assessments, which may only be approved by the Legislature, must be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on statewide student assessments and must be objective in their determination of student achievement of state standards. If a student meets the state standard on the alternative assessment, he or she must earn a CAA. The alternative assessments include:

- grade comparison, provided the student has a qualifying grade point average;
- earning a high enough score on the SAT or ACT;
- earning a high enough score on an Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate exam;
- earning college credit by completing a dual credit course in ELA or mathematics; and
- taking and passing a locally-determined course and associated assessment.

Limited Waiver Options for Certificates of Academic and Individual Achievement.

Legislation adopted in 2017 (chapter 31, Laws of 2017 3rd sp. sess., enacted as Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2224), made numerous changes to provisions governing and affecting graduation requirements. Among other changes, the legislation established an expedited appeals process authorizing the SPI, following local approval, to waive requirements for the CAAs and

the CIAs for qualifying students in the graduating classes of 2014 through 2018 who have not met standard on ELA assessments, mathematics assessments, or both.

In addition, districts may waive specific requirements pertaining to the CAA for students who transferred to a Washington public school in their junior or senior year or who have special, unavoidable circumstances.

High School Completion Programs.

Legislation adopted in 2004 directed the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop a program plan to provide a continuing education option for students who are eligible for the state's Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) and who need more time to develop language proficiency, but who are more age-appropriately suited for a postsecondary learning environment than a high school environment. In developing the plan, the SPI was directed to consider options to formally recognize the accomplishments of students in the TBIP who have completed grade 12 but have not earned a CAA.

Additionally, in accordance with a pilot program adopted by the Legislature in 2007, qualifying students were eligible to enroll in a high school completion project through courses or a program of study made available by a community or technical college participating in a high school completion program. In order to qualify for participation in the pilot program, the student must have completed all state and local high school graduation requirements except for earning a CAA or CIA, and must satisfy assessment-related and other requirements. The opportunity to meet all eligibility criteria for enrollment in the program expired August 1, 2015.

Summary of Bill:

High School Graduation Requirements - Decoupling from Assessments.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, requirements for graduating from high school are decoupled from statewide high school assessments by discontinuing the CAA, the earning of which is currently required as proof that a student has successfully met standard on statewide assessments required for graduation. The CIA is also discontinued and is no longer a graduation requirement for qualifying students.

The SPI and the SBE remain obligated to maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, but numerous provisions related to assessments and the earning of a CAA are modified or deleted. For example:

- all alternative assessment options for earning a CAA are discontinued;
- a provision requiring that the statewide high school assessments in English Language arts and mathematics be specifically administered in grade 10 is removed;
- a temporary provision governing end-of-course assessments for high school mathematics is discontinued; and
- provisions referencing CAAs (or CIAs) that govern International Baccalaureate diplomas, the Running Start Program, high school transcripts, and private schools are modified to reflect the elimination of the CAA and the CIA.

High School Completion Programs.

Provisions governing the program for providing a continuing education option for older students who are eligible for the state's TBIP and who need more time to develop language proficiency, are modified to eliminate references to obtaining a CAA or CIA and related acknowledgements by the SPI.

A substantively expired high school completion pilot program for qualifying students who have completed all state and local high school graduation requirements except for earning a CAA or CIA is eliminated.

Miscellaneous Provisions.

Various other changes, largely of a technical nature, related to the statewide student assessment system are made. Examples include:

- updating obsolete references to the Washington Assessment of Student Learning;
- changing certain assessment references from reading and writing to English language arts; and
- changing certain references from mastering the essential academic learning requirements to learning those requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 11, 2019.

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