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SENATE BILL 5968

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State of Washington                      58th Legislature                      2003 Regular Session

By Senators Johnson and Finkbeiner; by request of Governor Locke

Read first time 02/25/2003. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to the assessment of essential academic learning  
2 requirements in communication, social studies, civics, arts, and health  
3 and fitness; and amending RCW 28A.655.060.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5            **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.655.060 and 2001 2nd sp.s. c 20 s 1 are each  
6 amended to read as follows:

7            (1) The Washington commission on student learning is hereby  
8 established. The primary purposes of the commission are to identify  
9 the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be  
10 able to do based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, to  
11 develop student assessment and school accountability systems, to review  
12 current school district data reporting requirements and make  
13 recommendations on what data is necessary for the purposes of  
14 accountability and meeting state information needs, and to take other  
15 steps necessary to develop a performance-based education system. The  
16 commission shall include three members of the state board of education,  
17 three members appointed by the governor before July 1, 1992, and five  
18 members appointed no later than June 1, 1993, by the governor elected  
19 in the November 1992 election. The governor shall appoint a chair from

1 the commission members, and fill any vacancies in gubernatorial  
2 appointments that may occur. The state board of education shall fill  
3 any vacancies of state board of education appointments that may occur.  
4 In making the appointments, educators, business leaders, and parents  
5 shall be represented, and nominations from statewide education,  
6 business, and parent organizations shall be requested. Efforts shall  
7 be made to ensure that the commission reflects the racial and ethnic  
8 diversity of the state's K-12 student population and that the major  
9 geographic regions in the state are represented. Appointees shall be  
10 qualified individuals who are supportive of educational restructuring,  
11 who have a positive record of service, and who will devote sufficient  
12 time to the responsibilities of the commission to ensure that the  
13 objectives of the commission are achieved.

14 (2) The commission shall establish advisory committees. Membership  
15 of the advisory committees shall include, but not necessarily be  
16 limited to, professionals from the office of the superintendent of  
17 public instruction and the state board of education, and other state  
18 and local educational practitioners and student assessment specialists.

19 (3) The commission, with the assistance of the advisory committees,  
20 shall:

21 (a) Develop essential academic learning requirements based on the  
22 student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Essential academic learning  
23 requirements shall be developed, to the extent possible, for each of  
24 the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall  
25 be considered primary. Essential academic learning requirements for  
26 RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW  
27 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be completed no later than March 1,  
28 1995. Essential academic learning requirements that incorporate the  
29 remainder of RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals two, three, and  
30 four, shall be completed no later than March 1, 1996. To the maximum  
31 extent possible, the commission shall integrate goal four and the  
32 knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the development of the  
33 essential academic learning requirements;

34 (b)(i) The commission and superintendent of public instruction  
35 shall develop a statewide academic assessment system for use in the  
36 elementary, middle, and high school years designed to determine if each  
37 student has learned the essential academic learning requirements  
38 identified in (a) of this subsection. The academic assessment system

1 shall include a variety of assessment methods, including criterion-  
 2 referenced and performance-based measures. Performance standards for  
 3 determining if a student has successfully completed an assessment shall  
 4 be determined by the commission and the superintendent of public  
 5 instruction in consultation with the advisory committees required in  
 6 subsection (2) of this section.

7 (ii) The assessment system shall be designed so that the results  
 8 under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to evaluate  
 9 instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate educational  
 10 support for students who have not learned the essential academic  
 11 learning requirements at the appropriate periods in the student's  
 12 educational development.

13 (iii) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning  
 14 requirements shall be available for voluntary use by school districts  
 15 and shall be required to be administered by school districts according  
 16 to the following schedule unless the legislature takes action to delay  
 17 or prevent implementation of the assessment system and essential  
 18 academic learning requirements. Communication, social studies, arts,  
 19 and health and fitness assessments shall be developed by the  
 20 superintendent of public instruction as classroom-based assessments.  
 21 These assessments shall be made available to school districts as  
 22 requested by school districts and are not required to be administered  
 23 by school districts.

	<b>Assessments</b>	<b>Assessments</b>
	<b>available for</b>	<b>required to be</b>
	<b>voluntary use</b>	<b>administered</b>
	<b>(School years)</b>	<b>(School years)</b>

28 **Reading, Writing,**  
 29 **((Communication,))**

30 **Mathematics**

- Elementary school	1996-97	1997-98
- Middle school	1997-98	2000-01
- High school	1998-99	2000-01

34 **Science**

- High school	2002-03	2003-04
- Middle school	2002-03	2003-04

1	- Elementary school	2003-04	2004-05
2	<b><u>Communication</u></b>		
3	- <u>Elementary school</u>	<u>1996-97</u>	
4	- <u>Middle school</u>	<u>1997-98</u>	
5	- <u>High school</u>	<u>1998-99</u>	
6	<b>Social Studies</b>		
7	- Elementary, middle,	2004-05	<del>((2007-08))</del>
8	and high school		
9	<b><u>Civics</u></b>		
10	- <u>High school</u>	<u>2004-05</u>	<u>2007-08</u>
11	<b>Arts</b>		
12	- Middle and high school	2005-06	<del>((2008-09))</del>
13	- Elementary school	2005-06	<del>((2009-10))</del>
14	<b>Health, Fitness</b>		
15	- Middle and high school	2005-06	<del>((2008-09))</del>
16	- Elementary school	2005-06	<del>((2009-10))</del>

17 The completed assessments and assessments still in development  
18 shall be transferred by the commission on student learning to the  
19 superintendent of public instruction by June 30, 1999.

20 (iv) To the maximum extent possible, the commission and the  
21 superintendent of public instruction shall integrate knowledge and  
22 skill areas in development of the assessments.

23 Assessments for goals three and four of RCW 28A.150.210 shall be  
24 integrated in the essential academic learning requirements and  
25 assessments for goals one and two.

26 (v) The commission on student learning may modify the essential  
27 academic learning requirements and the assessments, as needed, before  
28 June 30, 1999. The superintendent of public instruction may modify the  
29 essential academic learning requirements and the assessments, as  
30 needed, after June 30, 1999. The commission and superintendent shall,  
31 upon request, provide opportunities for the education committees of the  
32 house of representatives and the senate to review the assessments and  
33 proposed modifications to the essential academic learning requirements  
34 before the modifications are adopted.

35 (vi) The commission and the superintendent of public instruction  
36 shall develop assessments that are directly related to the essential  
37 academic learning requirements, and are not biased toward persons with

1 different learning styles, racial or ethnic backgrounds, or on the  
2 basis of gender;

3 (c) After a determination is made by the state board of education  
4 that the high school assessment system has been implemented and that it  
5 is sufficiently reliable and valid, successful completion of the high  
6 school assessment shall lead to a certificate of mastery. The  
7 certificate of mastery shall be obtained by most students at about the  
8 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the student has successfully  
9 mastered the essential academic learning requirements during his or her  
10 educational career. The certificate of mastery shall be required for  
11 graduation but shall not be the only requirement for graduation. The  
12 commission shall make recommendations to the state board of education  
13 regarding the relationship between the certificate of mastery and high  
14 school graduation requirements. Upon achieving the certificate of  
15 mastery, schools shall provide students with the opportunity to pursue  
16 career and educational objectives through educational pathways that  
17 emphasize integration of academic and vocational education.  
18 Educational pathways may include, but are not limited to, programs such  
19 as work-based learning, school-to-work transition, tech prep,  
20 vocational-technical education, running start, and preparation for  
21 technical college, community college, or university education. Any  
22 middle school, junior high school, or high school using educational  
23 pathways shall ensure that all participating students will continue to  
24 have access to the courses and instruction necessary to meet admission  
25 requirements at baccalaureate institutions. Students shall be allowed  
26 to enter the educational pathway of their choice. Before accepting a  
27 student into an educational pathway, the school shall inform the  
28 student's parent of the pathway chosen, the opportunities available to  
29 the student through the pathway, and the career objectives the student  
30 will have exposure to while pursuing the pathway. Parents and students  
31 dissatisfied with the opportunities available through the selected  
32 educational pathway shall be provided with the opportunity to transfer  
33 the student to any other pathway provided in the school. Schools may  
34 not develop educational pathways that retain students in high school  
35 beyond the date they are eligible to graduate, and may not require  
36 students who transfer between pathways to complete pathway requirements  
37 beyond the date the student is eligible to graduate;

1 (d) Consider methods to address the unique needs of special  
2 education students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of  
3 this subsection;

4 (e) Consider methods to address the unique needs of highly capable  
5 students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of this  
6 subsection;

7 (f) Develop recommendations on the time, support, and resources,  
8 including technical assistance, needed by schools and school districts  
9 to help students achieve the essential academic learning requirements.  
10 These recommendations shall include an estimate for the legislature,  
11 superintendent of public instruction, and governor on the expected cost  
12 of implementing the academic assessment system;

13 (g) Develop recommendations for consideration by the higher  
14 education coordinating board for adopting college and university  
15 entrance requirements for public school students that are consistent  
16 with the essential academic learning requirements and the certificate  
17 of mastery;

18 (h) Review current school district data reporting requirements for  
19 the purposes of accountability and meeting state information needs.  
20 The commission on student learning shall report recommendations to the  
21 joint select committee on education restructuring by September 15,  
22 1996, on:

23 (i) What data is necessary to compare how school districts are  
24 performing before the essential academic learning requirements and the  
25 assessment system are implemented with how school districts are  
26 performing after the essential academic learning requirements and the  
27 assessment system are implemented; and

28 (ii) What data is necessary pertaining to school district reports  
29 under the accountability systems developed by the commission on student  
30 learning under this section;

31 (i) Recommend to the legislature, governor, state board of  
32 education, and superintendent of public instruction:

33 (i) A statewide accountability system to monitor and evaluate  
34 accurately and fairly at elementary, middle, and high schools the level  
35 of learning occurring in individual schools and school districts with  
36 regard to the goals included in RCW 28A.150.210 (1) through (4). The  
37 accountability system must assess each school individually against its

1 own baseline, schools with similar characteristics, and schools  
2 statewide. The system shall include school-site, school district, and  
3 state-level accountability reports;

4 (ii) A school assistance program to help schools and school  
5 districts that are having difficulty helping students meet the  
6 essential academic learning requirements as measured by performance on  
7 the elementary, middle school, and high school assessments;

8 (iii) A system to intervene in schools and school districts in  
9 which significant numbers of students persistently fail to learn the  
10 essential academic learning requirements or meet the standards  
11 established for the elementary, middle school, and high school  
12 assessments; and

13 (iv) An awards program to provide incentives to school staff to  
14 help their students learn the essential academic learning requirements,  
15 with each school being assessed individually against its own baseline,  
16 schools with similar characteristics, and the statewide average.  
17 Incentives shall be based on the rate of percentage change of students  
18 achieving the essential academic learning requirements and progress on  
19 meeting the statewide average. School staff shall determine how the  
20 awards will be spent.

21 The commission shall make recommendations regarding a statewide  
22 accountability system for reading in grades kindergarten through four  
23 by November 1, 1997. Recommendations for an accountability system in  
24 the other subject areas and grade levels shall be made no later than  
25 June 30, 1999;

26 (j) Report annually by December 1st to the legislature, the  
27 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board  
28 of education on the progress, findings, and recommendations of the  
29 commission; and

30 (k) Make recommendations to the legislature and take other actions  
31 necessary or desirable to help students meet the student learning  
32 goals.

33 (4) The commission shall coordinate its activities with the state  
34 board of education and the office of the superintendent of public  
35 instruction.

36 (5) The commission shall seek advice broadly from the public and  
37 all interested educational organizations in the conduct of its work,  
38 including holding periodic regional public hearings.

1 (6) The commission shall select an entity to provide staff support  
2 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
3 provide administrative oversight and be the fiscal agent for the  
4 commission. The commission may direct the office of the superintendent  
5 of public instruction to enter into subcontracts, within the  
6 commission's resources, with school districts, teachers, higher  
7 education faculty, state agencies, business organizations, and other  
8 individuals and organizations to assist the commission in its  
9 deliberations.

10 (7) Members of the commission shall be reimbursed for travel  
11 expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.

12 (8)(a) By September 30, 1997, the commission on student learning,  
13 the state board of education, and the superintendent of public  
14 instruction shall jointly present recommendations to the education  
15 committees of the house of representatives and the senate regarding the  
16 high school assessments, the certificate of mastery, and high school  
17 graduation requirements.

18 In preparing recommendations, the commission on student learning  
19 shall convene an ad hoc working group to address questions, including:

20 (i) What type of document shall be used to identify student  
21 performance and achievement and how will the document be described?

22 (ii) Should the students be required to pass the high school  
23 assessments in all skill and content areas, or only in select skill and  
24 content areas, to graduate?

25 (iii) How will the criteria for establishing the standards for  
26 passing scores on the assessments be determined?

27 (iv) What timeline should be used in phasing-in the assessments as  
28 a graduation requirement?

29 (v) What options may be used in demonstrating how the results of  
30 the assessments will be displayed in a way that is meaningful to  
31 students, parents, institutions of higher education, and potential  
32 employers?

33 (vi) Are there other or additional methods by which the assessments  
34 could be used to identify achievement such as endorsements, standards  
35 of proficiency, merit badges, or levels of achievement?

36 (vii) Should the assessments and certificate of mastery be used to  
37 satisfy college or university entrance criteria for public school  
38 students? If yes, how should these methods be phased-in?



1           (b) The ad hoc working group shall report its recommendations to  
2 the commission on student learning, the state board of education, and  
3 the superintendent of public instruction by June 15, 1997. The  
4 commission shall report the ad hoc working group's recommendations to  
5 the education committees of the house of representatives and senate by  
6 July 15, 1997. Final recommendations of the commission on student  
7 learning, the state board of education, and the superintendent of  
8 public instruction shall be presented to the education committees of  
9 the house of representatives and the senate by September 30, 1997.

10           (9) The Washington commission on student learning shall expire on  
11 June 30, 1999.

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