

# HOUSE BILL REPORT

## SB 5639

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**As Reported by House Committee On:**  
Education

**Title:** An act relating to alternative student assessments.

**Brief Description:** Concerning alternative student assessments.

**Sponsors:** Senators Conway and Zeiger.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:**

Education: 3/16/17, 3/28/17 [DPA].

**Brief Summary of Bill**  
**(As Amended by Committee)**

- 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, and modifying provisions requiring the State Board of Education (SBE) to identify scores that high school students must meet in order to earn a CAA.
- Preserves provisions requiring that the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the SBE maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, but removes certain provisions governing mathematics and science assessments.
- Modifies certain high school completion programs, including discontinuing a partially expired high school completion program for qualifying students who have met all graduation requirements except earning a CIA or CAA.

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*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.*

- Applies to the graduating class of 2017 and subsequent graduating classes.

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## HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended. Signed by 17 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Stonier, Vice Chair; Harris, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Johnson, Kilduff, Lovick, McCaslin, Ortiz-Self, Senn, Slatter, Springer, Steele and Volz.

**Minority Report:** Do not pass. Signed by 2 members: Representatives Hargrove and Stokesbary.

**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 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. The federal Every Student Achieves 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, as well as in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school in science.

In recent years, high school mathematics have been assessed in Washington using end-of-course tests (EOCs) in Algebra I and Geometry, and a tenth grade reading and writing assessment has also been utilized. In 2011 legislation directed that high school science be assessed using a Biology EOC. The Legislature subsequently expressed intent to transition from a Biology EOC to a comprehensive science assessment. Assessments based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), standards which are being phased in currently, will begin in 2018.

In 2013 the SPI was directed to implement, beginning in the 2015 school year, student assessments developed with a multistate consortium in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. (Washington is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, known as SBAC.) The SPI was also directed to use test items from the SBAC assessments to develop a tenth grade ELA assessment and modify the Algebra I and Geometry EOCs for use through the transition period.

The SBE is responsible for establishing the performance scores that students must meet on state assessments. In accordance with statutory requirements, the SBE has established performance scores for the assessments used during the transition period, as well as the SBAC assessments. In setting scores for the high school SBAC assessments, the SBE must

review the experience during the transition period, examine scores used in other states for the SBAC assessments, including states that require passage of an eleventh grade assessment for graduation. 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 Washington public high school. To obtain a CAA, a student must meet state standards on required statewide assessments. 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.

Since the graduating class of 2008, Washington students have been required to meet the state standards on the assessment in reading and mathematics to obtain a CAA and graduate from high school. Legislation adopted in 2004 required the graduating classes of 2010 onward to meet standard on a statewide high school science assessment to earn a CAA for purposes of high school graduation, but subsequent legislation has thrice delayed this requirement.

Graduation requirements obligate students in the graduating classes of 2017 and 2018 to meet the standard on: (1) the state assessments in ELA or the ELA SBAC; (2) at least one of the mathematics EOCs or the mathematics SBAC; (3) and the Biology EOC or the NGSS Assessment for the classes of 2017 and 2018, respectively. Beginning with the graduating class of 2019, the SBAC assessments in the ELA and mathematics will be used to demonstrate that students meet the state standard in those subjects, and the NGSS assessment will be used to demonstrate that students meet the state standard in science.

Below is a chart illustrating the assessments required for the graduating class of 2017 and beyond.

<b>Graduating Class</b>	<b>English Language Arts</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
2017 and 2018	10th Grade ELA or 11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	Algebra I EOC or Geometry EOC or 11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Biology EOC (2017) with Next Generation Science Standard Assessment for 2018.
2019 Onward	11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Next Generation Science Standard Assessment.

Alternative Assessment Options.

Alternative assessment options exist to earn a CAA for those who have taken an assessment at least once. These include:

- grade comparison;
- earning a high enough score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test or American College Test (ACT);

- earning a high enough score on an Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate exam; and
- collection of evidence, scored at the state level or by regional panels of educators.

Current law also includes provisions for waiving 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 the twelfth grade 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.

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#### **Summary of Amended Bill:**

##### High School Graduation Requirements: Elimination of CAA, CIA, and Alternative Assessment Options.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2017, 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 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:

- provisions requiring the SBE to identify assessment scores that high school students must meet in order to meet standard and obtain a CAA are discontinued;
- all alternative assessment options for earning a CAA are discontinued;
- a temporary provision governing end-of-course assessments for high school mathematics is discontinued;

- a provision governing the statewide high school assessment in science 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.

The CIA is also discontinued and no longer required for graduation for qualifying students. Students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system, even with accommodations, may, through multiple options, demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with their individual education programs.

#### 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. The plan for the program must consider options to formally recognize the accomplishments of students in the TBIP who have completed the twelfth grade but have not met all applicable graduation requirements.

A 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. As noted previously, the opportunity to meet all eligibility criteria for enrollment in the program expired August 1, 2015.

#### Student Learning Plans.

Current requirements for student learning plans, provisions that are eliminated in the repeal of alternative assessment provisions, are generally preserved.

### **Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:**

The amended bill makes the following changes to the original bill:

- removes all provisions of the underlying bill;
- decouples graduation requirements 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;
- discontinues the 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, and modifying provisions requiring the SBE to identify scores that high school students must meet in order to earn a CAA;
- preserves provisions requiring that the SPI and the SBE maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, but removes certain provisions governing mathematics and science assessments;
- modifies certain high school completion programs, including discontinuing a partially expired high school completion program for qualifying students who have met all graduation requirements except earning a CIA or CAA;

- applies to the graduating class of 2017 and subsequent graduating classes; and
  - includes an emergency clause making all provisions effective immediately.
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**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available.

**Effective Date of Amended Bill:** The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

**Staff Summary of Public Testimony:**

(In support) This bill is the result of a request from a technical high school. Some students at these high schools have been unable to obtain a diploma until they were 21 years old. The issues in this bill, and issues for technical high schools in general, indicate that the Legislature has not paid sufficient attention to these high schools. Although there is a bill in the Senate that would address the issues of this bill, the bill should be kept alive until the outcome of that legislation is determined.

The majority of technical high school students have enrolled in these schools because a traditional high school has not worked for them. Technical high schools allow students to work toward a diploma and an industry certificate. Statewide assessments are based on common core standards, but technical high school students are taking courses that are career-oriented and not bound to common core standards. The differences in the curriculum place the technical high school students at a disadvantage with respect to state assessments. The longer the student is enrolled in the technical high school, the lower the student scores on the statewide assessments. The state assessment data, however, is not an accurate depiction of the training and education received at these schools.

Students at the Northwest Career and Technical High School must be 16 years old to enroll, it is their junior year, but the students must return to their home high school to take statewide high school assessments. If they do not pass those assessments, they can take the ACT at the technical high school, and the technical high school can help them with related preparation materials. This bill provides students with the opportunity to take the ACT test without having to return to their home high school and take the statewide assessments.

(Opposed) None.

**Persons Testifying:** Senator Conway, prime sponsor; David Chappell, Bates Technical High School; and Loren Davis, Northwest Career and Technical High School.

**Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying:** None.