
HOUSE BILL 1403

State of Washington 54th Legislature 1995 Regular Session

By Representatives B. Thomas, Radcliff, Carrell and Thompson

Read first time 01/24/95. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the certificate of mastery; amending RCW
2 28A.630.885; adding a new section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; and providing
3 an expiration date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.630
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1) The assessment system developed for high school pursuant to RCW
8 28A.630.885(3)(b)(i) shall include assessments for three different
9 certificates of mastery: Academic, general, and applied.

10 (a) Achievement of the academic certificate requires advanced
11 competency in and conceptual knowledge of the basics (reading, writing,
12 communication, mathematics), plus extensive additional knowledge and
13 competence in science, civics, history, geography, a foreign language,
14 health, fitness, and the arts. Once implemented, achievement of the
15 academic certificate shall be required for public school students
16 graduating after June 30, 2000, to gain admission into a public four-
17 year institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

18 (b) Achievement of the general certificate requires advanced
19 competency in the basics, plus knowledge and competency in science,

1 civics, history, geography, health, fitness, and the arts. Once
2 implemented, achievement of the general certificate shall be required
3 for public school students graduating after June 30, 2001, to gain
4 admission into a public community or technical college.

5 (c) Achievement of the applied certificate requires competency in
6 the basics, plus a working general understanding of science, civics,
7 history, geography, health, fitness, and the arts.

8 (2) The assessments leading to the three certificates in subsection
9 (1) of this section shall be offered initially to students at about the
10 age of sixteen. Students who are not successful in passing an
11 assessment the first time, or who want to achieve a higher level
12 certificate, may take the assessment up to twice a year. A student
13 attending high school shall take the assessment in the district in
14 which the student is attending. A student who is not attending school
15 shall take the assessment in the school district in which the student
16 resides.

17 (3) The assessment leading to the academic certificate shall be
18 implemented beginning in the 1998-99 school year. The general
19 certificate assessment shall be implemented in the 1999-2000 school
20 year, and the applied certificate assessment shall be implemented in
21 the 2000-01 school year.

22 (4) Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, a student must achieve
23 at least the applied certificate to graduate. The level of mastery
24 shall be prominently indicated on graduation diploma and transcripts.
25 The state board of education shall assure that the applied certificate
26 assessment is reliable and valid before it is required for graduation.

27 (5) Although a certificate of mastery shall be required for
28 graduation, it shall not be the only requirement for graduation. The
29 commission on student learning shall make recommendations to the state
30 board of education regarding the relationship between the certificates
31 of mastery and high school graduation requirements. The state board of
32 education shall issue graduation guidelines for individual school
33 districts to consider. Individual school districts shall establish
34 graduation requirements.

35 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.630.885 and 1994 c 245 s 13 are each amended to
36 read as follows:

37 (1) The Washington commission on student learning is hereby
38 established. The primary purposes of the commission are to identify

1 the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be
2 able to do based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, to
3 develop student assessment and school accountability systems, and to
4 take other steps necessary to develop a performance-based education
5 system. The commission shall include three members of the state board
6 of education, three members appointed by the governor before July 1,
7 1992, and five members appointed no later than June 1, 1993, by the
8 governor elected in the November 1992 election. The governor shall
9 appoint a chair from the commission members, and fill any vacancies in
10 gubernatorial appointments that may occur. The state board of
11 education shall fill any vacancies of state board of education
12 appointments that may occur. In making the appointments, educators,
13 business leaders, and parents shall be represented, and nominations
14 from state-wide education, business, and parent organizations shall be
15 requested. Efforts shall be made to ensure that the commission
16 reflects the racial and ethnic diversity of the state's K-12 student
17 population and that the major geographic regions in the state are
18 represented. Appointees shall be qualified individuals who are
19 supportive of educational restructuring, who have a positive record of
20 service, and who will devote sufficient time to the responsibilities of
21 the commission to ensure that the objectives of the commission are
22 achieved.

23 (2) The commission shall establish advisory committees. Membership
24 of the advisory committees shall include, but not necessarily be
25 limited to, professionals from the office of the superintendent of
26 public instruction and the state board of education, and other state
27 and local educational practitioners and student assessment specialists.

28 (3) The commission, with the assistance of the advisory committees,
29 shall:

30 (a) Develop essential academic learning requirements based on the
31 student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Essential academic learning
32 requirements shall be developed, to the extent possible, for each of
33 the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall
34 be considered primary. Essential academic learning requirements for
35 RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW
36 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be completed no later than March 1,
37 1995. Essential academic learning requirements that incorporate the
38 remainder of RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals two, three, and
39 four, shall be completed no later than March 1, 1996. To the maximum

1 extent possible, the commission shall integrate goal four and the
2 knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the development of the
3 essential academic learning requirements;

4 (b)(i) The commission shall present to the state board of education
5 and superintendent of public instruction a state-wide academic
6 assessment system for use in the elementary, middle, and high school
7 years designed to determine if each student has mastered the essential
8 academic learning requirements identified in (a) of this subsection.
9 The academic assessment system shall include a variety of assessment
10 methods, including performance-based measures that are criterion-
11 referenced. Performance standards for determining if a student has
12 successfully completed an assessment shall be initially determined by
13 the commission in consultation with the advisory committees required in
14 subsection (2) of this section.

15 (ii) The assessment system shall be designed so that the results
16 under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to evaluate
17 instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate educational
18 support for students who have not mastered the essential academic
19 learning requirements at the appropriate periods in the student's
20 educational development. In addition, the assessment system shall be
21 used for issuing certificates of mastery pursuant to section 1 of this
22 act.

23 (iii) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning
24 requirements developed for RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the
25 mathematics component of RCW 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be
26 initially implemented in the elementary and middle grades by the state
27 board of education and superintendent of public instruction no later
28 than the 1996-97 school year, unless the legislature takes action to
29 delay or prevent implementation of the assessment system and essential
30 academic learning requirements. Assessments measuring the essential
31 academic learning requirements developed for RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3),
32 and (4), goals two, three, and four, shall be initially implemented in
33 the elementary and middle grades by the state board of education and
34 superintendent of public instruction no later than the 1997-98 school
35 year, unless the legislature takes action to delay or prevent
36 implementation of the assessment system and essential academic learning
37 requirements. Implementation of the assessment system in the high
38 school grades shall be in accordance with section 1 of this act. To

1 the maximum extent possible, the commission shall integrate knowledge
2 and skill areas in development of the assessments.

3 ~~(iv) ((Before the 2000-2001 school year, participation by school
4 districts in the assessment system shall be optional. School districts
5 that desire to participate before the 2000-2001 school year shall
6 notify the superintendent of public instruction in a manner determined
7 by the superintendent. Beginning in the 2000-2001 school year, all
8 school districts shall be required to participate in the assessment
9 system.~~

10 ~~(v))~~ The state board of education and superintendent of public
11 instruction may modify the essential academic learning requirements and
12 academic assessment system, as needed, in subsequent school years.

13 ~~((vi))~~ (v) The commission shall develop assessments that are
14 directly related to the essential academic learning requirements, and
15 are not biased toward persons with different learning styles, racial or
16 ethnic backgrounds, or on the basis of gender;

17 ~~(c) ((After a determination is made by the state board of education
18 that the high school assessment system has been implemented and that it
19 is sufficiently reliable and valid, successful completion of the high
20 school assessment shall lead to a certificate of mastery. The
21 certificate of mastery shall be obtained by most students at about the
22 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the student has successfully
23 mastered the essential academic learning requirements during his or her
24 educational career. The certificate of mastery shall be required for
25 graduation but shall not be the only requirement for graduation. The
26 commission shall make recommendations to the state board of education
27 regarding the relationship between the certificate of mastery and high
28 school graduation requirements. Upon achieving the certificate of
29 mastery, schools shall provide students with the opportunity to
30 continue to pursue career and educational objectives through
31 educational pathways that emphasize integration of academic and
32 vocational education. Educational pathways may include, but are not
33 limited to, programs such as work based learning, school to work
34 transition, tech prep, vocational technical education, running start,
35 and preparation for technical college, community college, or university
36 education;~~

37 ~~(d))~~ Consider methods to address the unique needs of special
38 education students when developing the assessments in (b) ~~((and (c))~~
39 of this subsection;

1 (~~(e)~~) (d) Consider methods to address the unique needs of highly
2 capable students when developing the assessments in (b) (~~(and (e))~~) of
3 this subsection;

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

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

15 (~~(h)~~) (g) By December 1, 1998, recommend to the legislature,
16 governor, state board of education, and superintendent of public
17 instruction:

18 (i) A state-wide accountability system to monitor and evaluate
19 accurately and fairly the level of learning occurring in individual
20 schools and school districts. The accountability system shall be
21 designed to recognize the characteristics of the student population of
22 schools and school districts such as gender, race, ethnicity,
23 socioeconomic status, and other factors. The system shall include
24 school-site, school district, and state-level accountability reports;

25 (ii) A school assistance program to help schools and school
26 districts that are having difficulty helping students meet the
27 essential academic learning requirements;

28 (iii) A system to intervene in schools and school districts in
29 which significant numbers of students persistently fail to learn the
30 essential academic learning requirements; and

31 (iv) An awards program to provide incentives to school staff to
32 help their students learn the essential academic learning requirements,
33 with each school being assessed individually against its own baseline.
34 Incentives shall be based on the rate of percentage change of students
35 achieving the essential academic learning requirements. School staff
36 shall determine how the awards will be spent.

37 It is the intent of the legislature to begin implementation of
38 programs in this subsection (~~(3)(h)~~) (3)(g) on September 1, 2000;

1 (~~(i)~~) (h) Report annually by December 1st to the legislature, the
2 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board
3 of education on the progress, findings, and recommendations of the
4 commission; and

5 (~~(j)~~) (i) Make recommendations to the legislature and take other
6 actions necessary or desirable to help students meet the student
7 learning goals.

8 (4) The commission shall coordinate its activities with the state
9 board of education and the office of the superintendent of public
10 instruction.

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

14 (6) The commission shall select an entity to provide staff support
15 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
16 provide administrative oversight and be the fiscal agent for the
17 commission. The commission may direct the office of the superintendent
18 of public instruction to enter into subcontracts, within the
19 commission's resources, with school districts, teachers, higher
20 education faculty, state agencies, business organizations, and other
21 individuals and organizations to assist the commission in its
22 deliberations.

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

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Section 2 of this act shall expire September
26 1, 1998.

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