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HOUSE BILL 2000

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State of Washington                      55th Legislature                      1997 Regular Session

By Representative B. Thomas

Read first time 02/18/97. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to the certificate of mastery; amending RCW  
2 28A.230.090; reenacting and amending RCW 28A.630.885; adding a new  
3 section to chapter 28A.630 RCW; repealing 1995 c 335 s 803  
4 (uncodified); and providing an expiration date.

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

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

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

11            (a) Achievement of the academic certificate requires advanced  
12 competency in and conceptual knowledge of the basics (reading, writing,  
13 communication, mathematics), plus extensive additional knowledge and  
14 competence in science, civics, history, geography, a foreign language,  
15 health, fitness, and the arts. Once implemented, achievement of the  
16 academic certificate shall be required for public school students  
17 graduating after June 30, 2002, to gain admission into a public four-  
18 year institution of higher education as defined in RCW 28B.10.016.

1 (b) Achievement of the general certificate requires demonstrated,  
2 progressive competency in the basics, plus knowledge and competency in  
3 science, civics, history, geography, health, fitness, and the arts.  
4 Once implemented, achievement of the general certificate shall be  
5 required for public school students graduating after June 30, 2003, to  
6 gain admission into a public community or technical college.

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

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

19 (3) The assessment leading to the academic certificate shall be  
20 implemented beginning in the 2000-01 school year. The general  
21 certificate assessment shall be implemented in the 2001-02 school year,  
22 and the applied certificate assessment shall be implemented in the  
23 2002-03 school year.

24 (4) Beginning in the 2002-03 school year, a student must achieve  
25 at least the applied certificate to graduate. The level of mastery  
26 shall be prominently indicated on the graduation diploma and the high  
27 school transcripts under RCW 28A.230.120. The state board of education  
28 shall assure that the applied certificate assessment is reliable and  
29 valid before it is required for graduation.

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

1       **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.630.885 and 1995 c 335 s 505 and 1995 c 209 s 1  
2 are each reenacted and amended to read as follows:

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

29       (2) The commission shall establish advisory committees. Membership  
30 of the advisory committees shall include, but not necessarily be  
31 limited to, professionals from the office of the superintendent of  
32 public instruction and the state board of education, and other state  
33 and local educational practitioners and student assessment specialists.

34       (3) The commission, with the assistance of the advisory committees,  
35 shall:

36       (a) Develop essential academic learning requirements based on the  
37 student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Essential academic learning  
38 requirements shall be developed, to the extent possible, for each of  
39 the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall

1 be considered primary. Essential academic learning requirements for  
2 RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW  
3 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be completed no later than March 1,  
4 1995. Essential academic learning requirements that incorporate the  
5 remainder of RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals two, three, and  
6 four, shall be completed no later than March 1, 1996. To the maximum  
7 extent possible, the commission shall integrate goal four and the  
8 knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the development of the  
9 essential academic learning requirements;

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

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

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

1 superintendent of public instruction no later than the 1998-99 school  
2 year, unless the legislature takes action to delay or prevent  
3 implementation of the assessment system and essential academic learning  
4 requirements. Implementation of the assessment system in the high  
5 school grades shall be in accordance with section 1 of this act. To  
6 the maximum extent possible, the commission shall integrate knowledge  
7 and skill areas in development of the assessments.

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

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

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

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

1 ~~and preparation for technical college, community college, or university~~  
2 ~~education;~~

3 ~~(d))~~ Consider methods to address the unique needs of special  
4 education students when developing the assessments in (b) ~~((and (e)))~~  
5 of this subsection;

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

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

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

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

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

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

33 ~~((i))~~ (h) By June 30, 1999, recommend to the legislature,  
34 governor, state board of education, and superintendent of public  
35 instruction:

36 (i) A state-wide accountability system to monitor and evaluate  
37 accurately and fairly the level of learning occurring in individual  
38 schools and school districts. The accountability system shall be  
39 designed to recognize the characteristics of the student population of

1 schools and school districts such as gender, race, ethnicity,  
2 socioeconomic status, and other factors. The system shall include  
3 school-site, school district, and 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;

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

10 (iv) An awards program to provide incentives to school staff to  
11 help their students learn the essential academic learning requirements,  
12 with each school being assessed individually against its own baseline.  
13 Incentives shall be based on the rate of percentage change of students  
14 achieving the essential academic learning requirements. School staff  
15 shall determine how the awards will be spent.

16 It is the intent of the legislature to begin implementation of  
17 programs in this subsection (3)((+i)) (h) on September 1, 2000;

18 ((+j)) (i) Report annually by December 1st to the legislature, the  
19 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board  
20 of education on the progress, findings, and recommendations of the  
21 commission; and

22 ((+k)) (j) Make recommendations to the legislature and take other  
23 actions necessary or desirable to help students meet the student  
24 learning goals.

25 (4) The commission shall coordinate its activities with the state  
26 board of education and the office of the superintendent of public  
27 instruction.

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

31 (6) The commission shall select an entity to provide staff support  
32 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall  
33 provide administrative oversight and be the fiscal agent for the  
34 commission. The commission may direct the office of the superintendent  
35 of public instruction to enter into subcontracts, within the  
36 commission's resources, with school districts, teachers, higher  
37 education faculty, state agencies, business organizations, and other  
38 individuals and organizations to assist the commission in its  
39 deliberations.

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

3 (8) This section expires June 30, 1999.

4 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.090 and 1993 c 371 s 3 are each amended to  
5 read as follows:

6 (1) The state board of education shall establish guidelines for  
7 high school graduation requirements or equivalencies for students. Any  
8 course in Washington state history and government used to fulfill high  
9 school graduation requirements is encouraged to include information on  
10 the culture, history, and government of the American Indian peoples who  
11 were the first inhabitants of the state.

12 (2) In recognition of the statutory authority of the state board of  
13 education to establish and enforce minimum high school graduation  
14 (~~requirements~~) guidelines, the state board shall periodically  
15 reevaluate the graduation (~~requirements~~) guidelines and shall report  
16 such findings to the legislature in a timely manner as determined by  
17 the state board.

18 (3) Pursuant to any requirement for instruction in languages other  
19 than English established by the state board of education or a local  
20 school district, or both, for purposes of high school graduation,  
21 students who receive instruction in American sign language or one or  
22 more American Indian languages shall be considered to have satisfied  
23 the state or local school district graduation requirement for  
24 instruction in one or more languages other than English.

25 (4) If requested by the student and his or her family, a student  
26 who has completed high school courses before attending high school  
27 shall be given high school credit which shall be applied to fulfilling  
28 high school graduation requirements if:

29 (a) The course was taken with high school students, if the academic  
30 level of the course exceeds the requirements for seventh and eighth  
31 grade classes, and the student has successfully passed by completing  
32 the same course requirements and examinations as the high school  
33 students enrolled in the class; or

34 (b) The academic level of the course exceeds the requirements for  
35 seventh and eighth grade classes and the course would qualify for high  
36 school credit, because the course is similar or equivalent to a course  
37 offered at a high school in the district as determined by the school  
38 district board of directors.



1           (5) Students who have taken and successfully completed high school  
2 courses under the circumstances in subsection (4) of this section shall  
3 not be required to take an additional competency examination or perform  
4 any other additional assignment to receive credit. Subsection (4) of  
5 this section shall also apply to students enrolled in high school on  
6 April 11, 1990, who took the courses before attending high school.

7           NEW SECTION.   **Sec. 4.** 1995 c 335 s 803 (uncodified) is repealed.

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