

SENATE BILL REPORT

2SHB 1674

As Reported By Senate Committee On:
Education, April 1, 1999

Title: An act relating to educational accountability for students and schools.

Brief Description: Providing educational accountability for students and schools.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Talcott, Veloria, Carlson, DeBolt, Wensman, Rockefeller, Bush, Thomas, Clements and Romero).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 3/29/99, 3/31/99, 4/1/99 [DPA, DNP].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Bauer, Brown, Goings, Kohl-Welles and Rasmussen.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Finkbeiner and Zarelli.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Under current law, once the State Board of Education (SBE) determines that the high school assessment system developed by the Commission on Student Learning (CSL) is reliable and valid, successful completion of the assessments will lead to a Certificate of Mastery (COM). The COM will be evidence that the student has successfully mastered the essential academic learning requirements. It is anticipated that most students will obtain the COM at about the age of 16. Achievement of a COM will be a high school graduation requirement, but not the only requirement.

Approved private school and home school students are not required to master the essential academic learning requirements, take the assessments developed by the CSL or meet the COM requirements to graduate from high school.

Summary of Amended Bill: A timeline is provided to implement COM. The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must create an advisory committee on COM.

Certificate of Mastery. Beginning in the 2000-01 school year, successful completion of the high school assessment in reading, writing, communications, mathematics and science earns a COM. A student's official transcript shows whether the student met the COM requirements and the highest proficiency level attained by content area. Successful

completion of the high school assessments in arts, health and fitness, and social studies may earn a CAP or endorsement, as determined later.

COM becomes a high school graduation requirement beginning with the graduating class of 2008. School districts may establish additional graduation requirements, including community service, senior projects, Carnegie units, student portfolios, and classroom-based assessments.

If a student fails to meet the assessment standard in a content area, the student may retake the assessment at no cost. If a student meets the standard in a content area but would like to improve the student's proficiency level, the student may retake the assessment once at the student's expense. The cost of retaking the assessment may not be more than the cost of administering the assessment. Opportunities to retake the assessments must be provided at least once a year.

Approved private school and home school students do not have to meet COM requirements to graduate high school. Additionally, Washington State's public colleges and universities may not require a COM as an admission requirement for approved private school or home school students.

Advisory Committee. By September 1, 1999, SPI must convene an advisory committee on COM. Membership is specified. Members are eligible for per diem and mileage allowances. The committee must make recommendations on incentives, program options, individual student improvement plans, processes to identify students unlikely to meet COM requirements, alternative routes to obtain a COM, and COM as a graduation requirement. Beginning in January 2000, SPI must annually report to the Legislature on the deliberations of the advisory committee. Prior to implementation of any policy recommended by the advisory committee, the policy must be submitted to the legislative education committees for review and comment. If specific funding is not provided for the advisory committee, this section is null and void.

State Board of Education. Prior to SBE adopting any minimum high school graduation requirements, SBE must present the proposed requirements to the legislative education committees for review and comment.

Amended Bill Compared to Second Substitute Bill: The name of the Certificate of Mastery is not changed to the Certificate of Academic Proficiency.

Whether successful completion of the high school assessments in the arts and health and fitness will lead to an endorsement or to a certificate will be determined later.

By December 31, 2000, the advisory committee must recommend alternative routes, other than assessment scores, for students who traditionally do not perform well on paper and pencil tests to demonstrate mastery of the EALRs and obtain a certificate of mastery.

It is specified that the program options recommended by the advisory committee are public school- options.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: This bill is important for the implementation of education reform. It names, defines and establishes a timeline for what has previously been called the Certificate of Mastery. The name is changed to Certificate of Academic Achievement. Every public school student must demonstrate academic proficiency in the basics. The timelines permit schools sufficient time to prepare and provide notice to current third graders that the higher expectations apply to them. There is an advisory committee convened by the SPI to look at ways to help students reach academic proficiency. Private and home-schooled students are not required to obtain the certificate.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: PRO: Rainer Houser, AWSP; Larry Davis, SBE; Bob Butts, OSPI; Steve Mullin, Washington Business Roundtable; Jerry Jenkins, Selah School District.