

SENATE BILL REPORT

2ESB 5686

As Passed Senate, June 6, 2001

Title: An act relating to changing academic assessments timelines.

Brief Description: Changing academic assessments timelines.

Sponsors: Senators Eide, Rasmussen, Kohl-Welles, McAuliffe and Carlson; by request of Governor Locke.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Education: 2/22/01, 2/27/01 [DP, DNP].

Passed Senate: 4/4/01, 46-2.

First Special Session: Passed Senate: 5/23/01, 36-6.

Second Special Session: Passed Senate: 6/6/01, 36-7.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Eide, Vice Chair; Carlson, Kastama, Kohl-Welles, Prentice, Rasmussen and Regala.

Minority Report: Do not pass.

Signed by Senators Finkbeiner, Hewitt, Hochstatter, Johnson and Zarelli.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

Background: Current law requires school districts to administer the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) in reading, writing, communication (listening), and math at the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades. The science assessment at the middle and high school levels is required to be administered in the 2000-01 school year. However, after piloting the science assessments, the Superintendent of Public Instruction determined that the science assessments do not have the appropriate technical rigor and recommended delaying implementation.

There are statutory timelines for implementing the WASL in other subject areas, including science at the elementary level; and social studies, arts and health and fitness at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

Summary of Bill: The statutory timelines are revised for the voluntary and required administration of the WASL in science, social studies, arts, and health and fitness.

Science: At the middle and high school level, the timelines for when the science WASL is available for voluntary use and when it is required are each delayed for three years. At the elementary level, the timeline for when the science WASL is available for voluntary use is delayed for one year and the timeline for when it is required is unchanged.

Social Studies, Arts, Health and Fitness: At the elementary, middle, and high school levels, the timelines for when the social studies, arts, and health and fitness WASL is available for voluntary use and when it is required are each delayed for two years.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Testimony For: The state is committed to education reform. However, the reform efforts are causing a lot of pressure on students, teachers, and schools. We don't want to overwhelm them by adding additional assessments now. We should delay but continue the development and implementation of the tests. But we need to be careful not to delay so long that the perception is that there will never be assessments in the other subject areas.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Kristin Bunce, Governor's Office; Bob Butts, OSPI; Greg Hall, OSPI; Karen Davis, WEA.