

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 6441

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As of January 30, 2002

**Title:** An act relating to the Washington assessment of student learning.

**Brief Description:** Changing provisions relating to the Washington assessment of student learning.

**Sponsors:** Senators Carlson, Eide, Finkbeiner, Keiser, Kastama and Hewitt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Education: 1/28/02.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Staff:** Heather Lewis-Lechner (786-7448)

**Background:** Under current Washington law, the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) test is given in the fourth, seventh and tenth grades. An additional assessment, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, is given in third, sixth and ninth grades. For each of these assessments, the results and all relevant student, school and district characteristics are compiled by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and must be made available annually to the public, the Legislature, all the local school districts and to parents of the children tested. For all except the sixth grade test, if students' scores on the tests indicate that students need help in identified areas, the school districts must evaluate and make adjustments in the appropriate instructional practices.

**Summary of Bill:** After verifying that the school district data is complete and accurate, the Superintendent of Public Instruction must redistribute the WASL test booklets to the appropriate schools. The schools must make each student's test booklet available to each student's teacher. The booklet is to be used as a diagnostic tool by the teacher to assist the student in meeting the state standards.

The RCW section referring to the sixth grade test is added to the list of tests that are consulted when the school district is evaluating and making adjustments to instructional practices. A technical amendment is also made to this list of tests to incorporate a recodified section of the code.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 18, 2002.

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

**Testimony For:** Parents want to be made aware of what areas their children need additional help in, and this bill will help them. If we want the WASL to be measuring individual

students and their progress, we need to give every student's entire test back to the teachers rather than just a portion of the test. Without the tests the teachers cannot determine what their students are needing to learn and cannot align that with what they should be teaching. The Certificate of Mastery is required of each student and so teachers need to be able to match each student up with his or her assessment in order to help that student succeed.

**Testimony Against:** Until teachers are trained in how to interpret the test and trained in understanding the scoring, OSPI is hesitant to release all of the tests to the schools. Additionally, getting the scoring done and the information back to the schools in less time will be difficult and costly. Giving the whole test away will also be a large increase in development costs because there will be a need to develop a larger pool of questions.

**Testified:** PRO: Senator Don Carlson, prime sponsor; Roy Maier, teacher; Karen Davis, WEA; CON: Terry Bergeson, Greg Hall, OSPI.