
SENATE BILL 6809

State of Washington 57th Legislature

2002 Regular Session

By Senators Hochstatter, Swecker, Stevens, Finkbeiner, Hewitt and Zarelli

Read first time 02/07/2002. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the Washington assessment of student learning;
2 and amending RCW 28A.655.060.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.655.060 and 2001 2nd sp.s. c 20 s 1 are each
5 amended to read as follows:

6 (1) The Washington commission on student learning is hereby
7 established. The primary purposes of the commission are to identify
8 the knowledge and skills all public school students need to know and be
9 able to do based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, to
10 develop student assessment and school accountability systems, to review
11 current school district data reporting requirements and make
12 recommendations on what data is necessary for the purposes of
13 accountability and meeting state information needs, and to take other
14 steps necessary to develop a performance-based education system. The
15 commission shall include three members of the state board of education,
16 three members appointed by the governor before July 1, 1992, and five
17 members appointed no later than June 1, 1993, by the governor elected
18 in the November 1992 election. The governor shall appoint a chair from
19 the commission members, and fill any vacancies in gubernatorial

1 appointments that may occur. The state board of education shall fill
2 any vacancies of state board of education appointments that may occur.
3 In making the appointments, educators, business leaders, and parents
4 shall be represented, and nominations from statewide education,
5 business, and parent organizations shall be requested. Efforts shall
6 be made to ensure that the commission reflects the racial and ethnic
7 diversity of the state's K-12 student population and that the major
8 geographic regions in the state are represented. Appointees shall be
9 qualified individuals who are supportive of educational restructuring,
10 who have a positive record of service, and who will devote sufficient
11 time to the responsibilities of the commission to ensure that the
12 objectives of the commission are achieved.

13 (2) The commission shall establish advisory committees. Membership
14 of the advisory committees shall include, but not necessarily be
15 limited to, professionals from the office of the superintendent of
16 public instruction and the state board of education, and other state
17 and local educational practitioners and student assessment specialists.

18 (3) The commission, with the assistance of the advisory committees,
19 shall:

20 (a) Develop essential academic learning requirements based on the
21 student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Essential academic learning
22 requirements shall be developed, to the extent possible, for each of
23 the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall
24 be considered primary. Essential academic learning requirements for
25 RCW 28A.150.210(1), goal one, and the mathematics component of RCW
26 28A.150.210(2), goal two, shall be completed no later than March 1,
27 1995. Essential academic learning requirements that incorporate the
28 remainder of RCW 28A.150.210 (2), (3), and (4), goals two, three, and
29 four, shall be completed no later than March 1, 1996. To the maximum
30 extent possible, the commission shall integrate goal four and the
31 knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the development of the
32 essential academic learning requirements;

33 (b)(i) The commission and superintendent of public instruction
34 shall develop a statewide academic assessment system for use in the
35 elementary, middle, and high school years designed to determine if each
36 student has learned the essential academic learning requirements
37 identified in (a) of this subsection. The academic assessment system
38 shall include a variety of assessment methods, including criterion-
39 referenced and performance-based measures. Performance standards for

1 determining if a student has successfully completed an assessment shall
2 be determined by the commission and the superintendent of public
3 instruction in consultation with the advisory committees required in
4 subsection (2) of this section.

5 (ii) The assessment system shall be designed so that the results
6 under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to evaluate
7 instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate educational
8 support for students who have not learned the essential academic
9 learning requirements at the appropriate periods in the student's
10 educational development.

11 (iii) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning
12 requirements shall be available for voluntary use by school districts
13 and shall be required to be administered by school districts according
14 to the following schedule unless the legislature takes action to delay
15 or prevent implementation of the assessment system and essential
16 academic learning requirements.

	Assessments available for voluntary use (School years)	Assessments required to be administered (School years)
Reading, Writing, Communication, Mathematics		
- Elementary school	1996-97	1997-98
- Middle school	1997-98	2000-01
- High school	1998-99	2000-01
Science		
- High school	2002-03	2003-04
- Middle school	2002-03	2003-04
- Elementary school	2003-04	2004-05
Social Studies		
- Elementary, middle, and high school	2004-05	2007-08
Arts		
- Middle and high school	2005-06	2008-09
- Elementary school	2005-06	2009-10
Health, Fitness		

1 - Middle and high 2005-06 2008-09
2 school
3 - Elementary school 2005-06 2009-10

4 The completed assessments and assessments still in development
5 shall be transferred by the commission on student learning to the
6 superintendent of public instruction by June 30, 1999.

7 (iv) The assessment shall include the following question: What do
8 you think of the Washington assessment of student learning?

9 (v) To the maximum extent possible, the commission and the
10 superintendent of public instruction shall integrate knowledge and
11 skill areas in development of the assessments.

12 Assessments for goals three and four of RCW 28A.150.210 shall be
13 integrated in the essential academic learning requirements and
14 assessments for goals one and two.

15 (~~(v)~~) (vi) The commission on student learning may modify the
16 essential academic learning requirements and the assessments, as
17 needed, before June 30, 1999. The superintendent of public instruction
18 may modify the essential academic learning requirements and the
19 assessments, as needed, after June 30, 1999. The commission and
20 superintendent shall, upon request, provide opportunities for the
21 education committees of the house of representatives and the senate to
22 review the assessments and proposed modifications to the essential
23 academic learning requirements before the modifications are adopted.

24 (~~(vi)~~) (vii) The commission and the superintendent of public
25 instruction shall develop assessments that are directly related to the
26 essential academic learning requirements, and are not biased toward
27 persons with different learning styles, racial or ethnic backgrounds,
28 or on the basis of gender;

29 (c) After a determination is made by the state board of education
30 that the high school assessment system has been implemented and that it
31 is sufficiently reliable and valid, successful completion of the high
32 school assessment shall lead to a certificate of mastery. The
33 certificate of mastery shall be obtained by most students at about the
34 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the student has successfully
35 mastered the essential academic learning requirements during his or her
36 educational career. The certificate of mastery shall be required for
37 graduation but shall not be the only requirement for graduation. The
38 commission shall make recommendations to the state board of education
39 regarding the relationship between the certificate of mastery and high

1 school graduation requirements. Upon achieving the certificate of
2 mastery, schools shall provide students with the opportunity to pursue
3 career and educational objectives through educational pathways that
4 emphasize integration of academic and vocational education.
5 Educational pathways may include, but are not limited to, programs such
6 as work-based learning, school-to-work transition, tech prep,
7 vocational-technical education, running start, and preparation for
8 technical college, community college, or university education. Any
9 middle school, junior high school, or high school using educational
10 pathways shall ensure that all participating students will continue to
11 have access to the courses and instruction necessary to meet admission
12 requirements at baccalaureate institutions. Students shall be allowed
13 to enter the educational pathway of their choice. Before accepting a
14 student into an educational pathway, the school shall inform the
15 student's parent of the pathway chosen, the opportunities available to
16 the student through the pathway, and the career objectives the student
17 will have exposure to while pursuing the pathway. Parents and students
18 dissatisfied with the opportunities available through the selected
19 educational pathway shall be provided with the opportunity to transfer
20 the student to any other pathway provided in the school. Schools may
21 not develop educational pathways that retain students in high school
22 beyond the date they are eligible to graduate, and may not require
23 students who transfer between pathways to complete pathway requirements
24 beyond the date the student is eligible to graduate;

25 (d) Consider methods to address the unique needs of special
26 education students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of
27 this subsection;

28 (e) Consider methods to address the unique needs of highly capable
29 students when developing the assessments in (b) and (c) of this
30 subsection;

31 (f) Develop recommendations on the time, support, and resources,
32 including technical assistance, needed by schools and school districts
33 to help students achieve the essential academic learning requirements.
34 These recommendations shall include an estimate for the legislature,
35 superintendent of public instruction, and governor on the expected cost
36 of implementing the academic assessment system;

37 (g) Develop recommendations for consideration by the higher
38 education coordinating board for adopting college and university
39 entrance requirements for public school students that are consistent

1 with the essential academic learning requirements and the certificate
2 of mastery;

3 (h) Review current school district data reporting requirements for
4 the purposes of accountability and meeting state information needs.
5 The commission on student learning shall report recommendations to the
6 joint select committee on education restructuring by September 15,
7 1996, on:

8 (i) What data is necessary to compare how school districts are
9 performing before the essential academic learning requirements and the
10 assessment system are implemented with how school districts are
11 performing after the essential academic learning requirements and the
12 assessment system are implemented; and

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

16 (i) Recommend to the legislature, governor, state board of
17 education, and superintendent of public instruction:

18 (i) A statewide accountability system to monitor and evaluate
19 accurately and fairly at elementary, middle, and high schools the level
20 of learning occurring in individual schools and school districts with
21 regard to the goals included in RCW 28A.150.210 (1) through (4). The
22 accountability system must assess each school individually against its
23 own baseline, schools with similar characteristics, and schools
24 statewide. The system shall include school-site, school district, and
25 state-level accountability reports;

26 (ii) A school assistance program to help schools and school
27 districts that are having difficulty helping students meet the
28 essential academic learning requirements as measured by performance on
29 the elementary, middle school, and high school assessments;

30 (iii) A system to intervene in schools and school districts in
31 which significant numbers of students persistently fail to learn the
32 essential academic learning requirements or meet the standards
33 established for the elementary, middle school, and high school
34 assessments; and

35 (iv) An awards program to provide incentives to school staff to
36 help their students learn the essential academic learning requirements,
37 with each school being assessed individually against its own baseline,
38 schools with similar characteristics, and the statewide average.
39 Incentives shall be based on the rate of percentage change of students

1 achieving the essential academic learning requirements and progress on
2 meeting the statewide average. School staff shall determine how the
3 awards will be spent.

4 The commission shall make recommendations regarding a statewide
5 accountability system for reading in grades kindergarten through four
6 by November 1, 1997. Recommendations for an accountability system in
7 the other subject areas and grade levels shall be made no later than
8 June 30, 1999;

9 (j) Report annually by December 1st to the legislature, the
10 governor, the superintendent of public instruction, and the state board
11 of education on the progress, findings, and recommendations of the
12 commission; and

13 (k) Make recommendations to the legislature and take other actions
14 necessary or desirable to help students meet the student learning
15 goals.

16 (4) The commission shall coordinate its activities with the state
17 board of education and the office of the superintendent of public
18 instruction.

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

22 (6) The commission shall select an entity to provide staff support
23 and the office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
24 provide administrative oversight and be the fiscal agent for the
25 commission. The commission may direct the office of the superintendent
26 of public instruction to enter into subcontracts, within the
27 commission's resources, with school districts, teachers, higher
28 education faculty, state agencies, business organizations, and other
29 individuals and organizations to assist the commission in its
30 deliberations.

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

33 (8)(a) By September 30, 1997, the commission on student learning,
34 the state board of education, and the superintendent of public
35 instruction shall jointly present recommendations to the education
36 committees of the house of representatives and the senate regarding the
37 high school assessments, the certificate of mastery, and high school
38 graduation requirements.

1 In preparing recommendations, the commission on student learning
2 shall convene an ad hoc working group to address questions, including:
3 (i) What type of document shall be used to identify student
4 performance and achievement and how will the document be described?
5 (ii) Should the students be required to pass the high school
6 assessments in all skill and content areas, or only in select skill and
7 content areas, to graduate?
8 (iii) How will the criteria for establishing the standards for
9 passing scores on the assessments be determined?
10 (iv) What timeline should be used in phasing-in the assessments as
11 a graduation requirement?
12 (v) What options may be used in demonstrating how the results of
13 the assessments will be displayed in a way that is meaningful to
14 students, parents, institutions of higher education, and potential
15 employers?
16 (vi) Are there other or additional methods by which the assessments
17 could be used to identify achievement such as endorsements, standards
18 of proficiency, merit badges, or levels of achievement?
19 (vii) Should the assessments and certificate of mastery be used to
20 satisfy college or university entrance criteria for public school
21 students? If yes, how should these methods be phased-in?
22 (b) The ad hoc working group shall report its recommendations to
23 the commission on student learning, the state board of education, and
24 the superintendent of public instruction by June 15, 1997. The
25 commission shall report the ad hoc working group's recommendations to
26 the education committees of the house of representatives and senate by
27 July 15, 1997. Final recommendations of the commission on student
28 learning, the state board of education, and the superintendent of
29 public instruction shall be presented to the education committees of
30 the house of representatives and the senate by September 30, 1997.
31 (9) The Washington commission on student learning shall expire on
32 June 30, 1999.

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