

---

**Education Committee**

---

**HB 1956**

**Brief Description:** Requiring civics assessments.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Upthegrove, Lantz, Quall and Santos.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Requires students in elementary, middle, and high school to take a classroom-based civics assessment.
- Requires the results of the assessment to be included in the students' records and, for high school students, posted on the students' transcripts.

**Hearing Date:** 2/21/05

**Staff:** Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

**Background:**

Students in elementary, middle, and high school are required to learn the state's essential academic learning requirements (EALR's) in social studies, among other subjects. Social studies includes history, geography, economics, civics and social studies skills. By the 2008-09 school year, school districts must have assessments or other strategies in place to make sure that their students have had an opportunity to learn the EALR's in social studies. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is in the process of developing and piloting classroom-based assessments in the different subjects included in social studies.

By law, students must study the state and federal constitutions before graduating from the state's public or private schools. In addition, public schools are required to have flag exercises in each class at the start of the day, observe Temperance and Good Citizenship Day on January 16th, and provide educational activities in observance of Veteran's Day.

The OSPI reports that its social studies assessments "mirror best practices and borrow heavily from successful statewide programs, such as We The People, Project Citizen, History Day, and Model United Nations. The OSPI's hope and belief is that students who engage in these authentic tasks throughout their K-12 careers will leave high school ready to be engaged, informed citizens, regardless of their professional track or future socioeconomic status."

**Summary of Bill:**

Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, students in elementary, middle, and high school will complete a classroom-based assessment in civics. The assessment must be approved by the OSPI. The results of the assessment will be included in the students' school records and recorded on the transcript of high school students.

The classroom-based civics assessments will join assessments in reading, writing, mathematics, and science as part of the state's assessment system.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 11, 2005.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.