
Education Committee

HB 2785

Brief Description: Authorizing alternative methods of assessment and appeal processes for the certificate of academic achievement.

Sponsors: Representatives Quall, Tom, P. Sullivan, Hunter, Morrell, Nixon, Rodne, Roberts, Schual-Berke, Simpson, Springer, Sells, Lantz, Linville, Dunshee and Kagi; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to implement two objective alternative assessments for students to demonstrate achievement of state academic standards: 1) a combination of student grades and scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning, and 2) a collection of evidence.

Hearing Date: 1/26/06

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Certificate of Academic Achievement.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, most students will be required to obtain a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) to obtain a diploma. Students must meet the state standards in reading, writing, and mathematics on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) to earn a CAA.

In 2004, the Legislature authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to develop options for objective alternative assessments for high school students to demonstrate they meet the state academic standards instead of relying on the WASL for this purpose. To use an alternative, a student must take the WASL at least twice. The Legislature also authorized development of an appeals process.

Alternative Assessments.

During 2004 and 2005, the SPI contracted with Dr. David Conley and the Center for Educational Policy Research to conduct a comprehensive review of alternative assessments and appeals in other states, and later an in-depth feasibility study of four possible options. The SPI is recommending two alternative assessments: a comparison of students' grades and WASL scores

and a collection of evidence based on student work samples. In addition, the SPI recommends creating separate appeals procedures for students with unusual circumstances. During the spring of 2006, the SPI is working with 20 high schools, skills centers, and Educational Service Districts to field test the collection of evidence by defining and collecting work samples and developing scoring guidelines.

Students in the class of 2008 will take the high school WASL in the spring of 2006. If they do not attain proficiency the first time, their first re-take opportunity will be in August of 2006. If they again do not meet the state standards, they could be eligible for an alternative assessment.

However, the Legislature must first formally approve implementation of an alternative assessment.

Summary of Bill:

Beginning in the 2006-07 school year, the SPI must implement two objective alternative assessment methods for students to demonstrate achievement of the state standards in content areas where they were not successful on the high school WASL. A student must meet the eligibility criteria under current law, and the SPI may require additional eligibility criteria.

The alternatives methods are:

1. A combination of a student's grades in applicable courses and the student's highest score on the high school WASL; and
2. An evaluation of a collection of work samples conducted at the state level or regionally under the SPI's supervision using uniform scoring criteria.

By June 1, 2006, the SPI must implement a process for students to appeal their WASL scores. By January 1, 2007, the SPI must also implement guidelines and appeals processes for waiving requirements pertaining to the CAA or the Certificate of Individual Achievement for students who transfer to a public school in their junior or senior year or who have special unavoidable circumstances.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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