
HOUSE BILL 1709

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2005 Regular Session

By Representatives Shabro, Talcott, Curtis, DeBolt, Ahern and Tom

Read first time 02/02/2005. Referred to Committee on Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to educational assessments; amending RCW
2 28A.230.190, 28A.230.193, 28A.230.195, 28A.230.230, 28A.230.250, and
3 28A.655.070; creating a new section; and providing an effective date.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that assessments
6 provide teachers, parents, the community, and policymakers with
7 valuable information that can be used for a variety of purposes.
8 Assessments that are nationally normed help teachers, parents, and the
9 community know how well their children are learning in comparison to
10 other children across the country and in neighboring schools and school
11 districts. These norm-referenced assessments are well understood by
12 parents and have been accepted for generations as one of the best ways
13 to measure the achievement and progress of individual students.
14 Criterion-referenced assessments, including the Washington assessment
15 of student learning, provide teachers, parents, and the community with
16 information on how well students are learning to state standards.
17 While criterion-referenced assessments provide information on how well
18 students are learning compared to their local and state peers, they do
19 not provide information on how well students are learning compared to

1 their peers in neighboring states or across the country. The
2 legislature finds that, while norm and criterion-referenced assessments
3 are useful, the most valuable assessments of all are diagnostic
4 assessments that provide teachers and parents with the information they
5 need to support and enhance the learning of individual students. The
6 legislature further finds that the state's assessment system needs to
7 be designed to give teachers, parents, and the community information in
8 all those dimensions.

9 Therefore, the legislature intends to ensure that the state's
10 assessment system is designed to provide information on how well
11 Washington's students are learning compared to their peers in
12 neighboring schools and across the state and country. The legislature
13 further intends that the assessment system include diagnostic
14 assessments and other instruments that help teachers and parents
15 discover the specific grade level expectations that students need
16 additional support to learn.

17 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.230.190 and 1999 c 373 s 201 are each amended to
18 read as follows:

19 (1) School districts shall assess students for second grade reading
20 accuracy and fluency skills starting in the 1998-99 school year as
21 provided in RCW 28A.300.320.

22 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall prepare and
23 conduct, with the assistance of school districts, a nationally norm-
24 referenced standardized achievement test ((~~te~~)) that, at the option of
25 school districts, may be given annually to all pupils in grade three.
26 The test shall assess students' basic skills in reading and
27 mathematics. Results of such tests and relevant student, school, and
28 district characteristics shall be compiled annually by the
29 superintendent of public instruction, who shall make those results
30 available annually to the public, to the legislature, to all local
31 school districts, and subsequently to parents of those children tested.
32 The results shall allow parents to ascertain the achievement levels of
33 their children as compared with the other students within the district,
34 the state, and the nation.

35 **Sec. 3.** RCW 28A.230.193 and 1999 c 373 s 301 are each amended to
36 read as follows:

1 The superintendent of public instruction shall prepare and conduct,
2 with the assistance of school districts, a nationally norm-referenced
3 standardized achievement test ((~~to~~)) that, at the option of school
4 districts, may be given annually to all pupils in grade six. The test
5 shall assess students' basic skills in reading/language arts and
6 mathematics. Results of such tests and relevant student, school, and
7 district characteristics shall be compiled by the superintendent of
8 public instruction, who shall make those results available annually to
9 the public, to the legislature, to all local school districts, and
10 subsequently to parents of those children tested. The results shall
11 allow parents to ascertain the achievement levels of their children as
12 compared with the other students within the district, the state, and
13 the nation.

14 **Sec. 4.** RCW 28A.230.195 and 1999 c 373 s 603 are each amended to
15 read as follows:

16 (1) If students' scores on the test or assessments under RCW
17 28A.230.190, 28A.230.230, and ((~~28A.630.885~~)) 28A.655.070 indicate that
18 students need help in identified areas, the school district shall
19 evaluate its instructional practices and make appropriate adjustments.

20 (2) Each school district shall notify the parents of each student
21 of their child's performance on the test and assessments conducted
22 under this chapter.

23 **Sec. 5.** RCW 28A.230.230 and 1999 c 373 s 401 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall prepare ((~~and~~
26 ~~conduct, with the assistance of school districts, an~~)) for the optional
27 use by school districts, a nationally norm-referenced annual assessment
28 of ((~~all~~)) students in the ninth grade. The purposes of the assessment
29 are to assist students, parents, and teachers in the planning and
30 selection of appropriate high school courses for students and to
31 provide information about students' current academic proficiencies both
32 in the basic skills of reading/language arts and mathematics, and in
33 the reasoning and thinking skills essential for successful entry into
34 those courses required for high school graduation. The assessment
35 shall also include the collection of information about students'
36 interests and plans for high school and beyond and shall include the

1 collection of other related student and school information. The
2 superintendent of public instruction shall make the results of the
3 assessment and relevant student, school, and district characteristics
4 available annually to the public, to the legislature, and to all school
5 districts, which shall in turn make them available to students,
6 parents, and teachers in a timely fashion.

7 (2) Upon request, the superintendent of public instruction shall
8 make available to requesting school districts the inventory used to
9 collect information about students' interests and plans for high school
10 and beyond for use by students in the eighth grade. To the extent
11 funds are appropriated, the superintendent shall provide the inventory,
12 tabulation services, and reporting at no cost or at reduced cost to
13 school districts.

14 **Sec. 6.** RCW 28A.230.250 and 1999 c 373 s 602 are each amended to
15 read as follows:

16 The superintendent of public instruction shall coordinate both the
17 procedures and the content of the tests and assessments required by the
18 state under this chapter and RCW 28A.655.070 to maximize the value of
19 the information provided to students as they progress and to teachers
20 and parents about students' talents, interests, and academic needs or
21 deficiencies so that appropriate programs can be provided to enhance
22 the likelihood of students' success both in school and beyond.

23 **Sec. 7.** RCW 28A.655.070 and 2004 c 19 s 204 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall develop
26 essential academic learning requirements that identify the knowledge
27 and skills all public school students need to know and be able to do
28 based on the student learning goals in RCW 28A.150.210, develop student
29 assessments, and implement the accountability recommendations and
30 requests regarding assistance, rewards, and recognition of the academic
31 achievement and accountability commission.

32 (2) The superintendent of public instruction shall:

33 (a) Periodically revise the essential academic learning
34 requirements, as needed, based on the student learning goals in RCW
35 28A.150.210. Goals one and two shall be considered primary. To the

1 maximum extent possible, the superintendent shall integrate goal four
2 and the knowledge and skill areas in the other goals in the essential
3 academic learning requirements; and

4 (b) Review and prioritize the essential academic learning
5 requirements and identify, with clear and concise descriptions, the
6 grade level content expectations to be assessed on the Washington
7 assessment of student learning and used for state or federal
8 accountability purposes. The review, prioritization, and
9 identification shall result in more focus and targeting with an
10 emphasis on depth over breadth in the number of grade level content
11 expectations assessed at each grade level. Grade level content
12 expectations shall be articulated over the grades as a sequence of
13 expectations and performances that are logical, build with increasing
14 depth after foundational knowledge and skills are acquired, and
15 reflect, where appropriate, the sequential nature of the discipline.
16 The office of the superintendent of public instruction, within seven
17 working days, shall post on its web site any grade level content
18 expectations provided to an assessment vendor for use in constructing
19 the Washington assessment of student learning.

20 (3) In consultation with the academic achievement and
21 accountability commission, the superintendent of public instruction
22 shall maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide academic
23 assessment system in the content areas of reading, writing,
24 mathematics, and science for use in the elementary, middle, and high
25 school years designed to determine if each student has mastered the
26 essential academic learning requirements identified in subsection (1)
27 of this section. School districts shall administer the assessments
28 under guidelines adopted by the superintendent of public instruction.
29 The academic assessment system shall include a variety of assessment
30 methods, including criterion-referenced and performance-based measures.
31 Beginning with the 2006-07 school year, the results of at least one
32 criterion-referenced assessment in reading and in mathematics for
33 elementary school, middle school, and high school shall be available in
34 a format that provides nationally norm-referenced results in addition
35 to other results. The norm-referenced results shall be annually
36 reported to parents, the community, the office of the superintendent of
37 public instruction, and the public at the same time and in the same
38 manner as the criterion-referenced results of the assessment.

1 (4) If the superintendent proposes any modification to the
2 essential academic learning requirements or the statewide assessments,
3 then the superintendent shall, upon request, provide opportunities for
4 the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate
5 to review the assessments and proposed modifications to the essential
6 academic learning requirements before the modifications are adopted.

7 (5)(a) The assessment system shall be designed so that the results
8 under the assessment system are used by educators as tools to evaluate
9 instructional practices, and to initiate appropriate educational
10 support for students who have not mastered the essential academic
11 learning requirements at the appropriate periods in the student's
12 educational development. Contracts with assessment vendors who provide
13 criterion-referenced assessments under this chapter shall include a
14 provision that requires the vendor to provide, in conjunction with the
15 assessment, diagnostic assessments or other instruments that are
16 inexpensive and quickly administered, easily scored by a teacher or
17 through technology, and designed to provide teachers with enough
18 information to determine student-specific performance on the grade
19 level expectations measured in the assessment.

20 (b) Assessments measuring the essential academic learning
21 requirements in the content area of science shall be available for
22 mandatory use in middle schools and high schools by the 2003-04 school
23 year and for mandatory use in elementary schools by the 2004-05 school
24 year unless the legislature takes action to delay or prevent
25 implementation of the assessment.

26 (6) By September 2007, the results for reading and mathematics
27 shall be reported in a format that will allow parents and teachers to
28 determine the academic gain a student has acquired in those content
29 areas from one school year to the next.

30 (7) To assist parents and teachers in their efforts to provide
31 educational support to individual students, the superintendent of
32 public instruction shall provide as much individual student performance
33 information as possible within the constraints of the assessment
34 system's item bank. The superintendent shall also provide to school
35 districts:

36 (a) Information on classroom-based and other assessments that may
37 provide additional achievement information for individual students; and

1 (b) A collection of diagnostic tools that educators may use to
2 evaluate the academic status of individual students. The tools shall
3 be designed to measure student-specific performance on grade level
4 expectations, and be inexpensive, easily administered, and quickly and
5 easily scored by the teacher or through technology, with results
6 provided in a format that may be easily shared with parents and
7 students. To the extent that funding is available for this purpose,
8 diagnostic tools that help teachers determine student-specific
9 performance on grade level expectations in mathematics for students in
10 the fourth, seventh, and tenth grades shall be available by September
11 1, 2006.

12 (8) To the maximum extent possible, the superintendent shall
13 integrate knowledge and skill areas in development of the assessments.

14 (9) Assessments for goals three and four of RCW 28A.150.210 shall
15 be integrated in the essential academic learning requirements and
16 assessments for goals one and two.

17 (10) The superintendent shall develop assessments that are directly
18 related to the essential academic learning requirements, and are not
19 biased toward persons with different learning styles, racial or ethnic
20 backgrounds, or on the basis of gender.

21 (11) The superintendent shall consider methods to address the
22 unique needs of special education students when developing the
23 assessments under this section.

24 (12) The superintendent shall consider methods to address the
25 unique needs of highly capable students when developing the assessments
26 under this section.

27 (13) The superintendent shall post on the superintendent's web site
28 lists of resources and model assessments in social studies, the arts,
29 and health and fitness.

30 NEW SECTION. Sec. 8. This act takes effect August 1, 2005.

--- END ---