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HOUSE BILL 1987

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State of Washington                      59th Legislature                      2005 Regular Session

By Representatives Priest, Ormsby and Curtis

Read first time 02/14/2005. Referred to Committee on Education.

1            AN ACT Relating to alternative assessments; amending RCW  
2 28A.655.061; adding a new section to chapter 28A.655 RCW; and providing  
3 an effective date.

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

5            NEW SECTION.    **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.655  
6 RCW to read as follows:

7            (1)(a) The legislature finds that education reform includes four  
8 learning goals, with two of the four goals focused on critical  
9 thinking, problem solving, and understanding the importance of work and  
10 how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect future career  
11 and educational opportunities. The legislature also finds that the  
12 original vision of education reform included performance-based measures  
13 that would allow students to demonstrate, through multiple ways, the  
14 knowledge and skills they had learned in school. The legislature finds  
15 that, because students come to school with different learning styles,  
16 the state's assessment system needs to include a variety of ways for  
17 students to demonstrate the knowledge and skills that they have  
18 acquired. Some students learn best through the hands-on active  
19 learning models typically available in career and technical education

1 programs. In addition, some students are able to do a better job of  
2 showing their knowledge and skills through active demonstrations rather  
3 than through paper and pencil tests.

4 (b) The legislature intends to honor the last two goals and the  
5 original vision of education reform by giving students an opportunity  
6 to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through rigorous career and  
7 technical education assessment alternatives that lead to industry  
8 certification.

9 (2)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in  
10 consultation with interested school districts, shall design a career  
11 and technical assessment alternative that:

12 (i) Is available to students enrolled in comprehensive career and  
13 technical education programs that lead to written, widely accepted  
14 state or national industry certification when the industry  
15 certification requires that the students demonstrate their skills and  
16 knowledge through an objective assessment or evaluation and the skills  
17 and knowledge included in the program are aligned to the state's high  
18 school reading, writing, mathematics, and science essential learnings;

19 (ii) Is available in programs that have previously been approved by  
20 the office of the superintendent of public instruction for the purpose  
21 of the assessment alternative; and

22 (iii) Is piloted beginning with the 2006-07 school year through the  
23 end of the 2011-12 school year, with an evaluation of its effectiveness  
24 and biennial reports to the legislature on its implementation. The  
25 biennial reports shall include the number of programs offering the  
26 alternative, the number of students in each program, and the aggregate  
27 results of participating students on the Washington assessment of  
28 student learning and the assessment or evaluation used to determine  
29 industry certification. Students in the pilot must take the high  
30 school assessment of student learning at least once and may be required  
31 to take a placement test used by the community and technical colleges  
32 to ascertain whether they would be able to transition to postsecondary  
33 work if they so chose.

34 (b) By October 2012, the superintendent of public instruction shall  
35 provide a final report on the pilots to the house of representatives  
36 and senate committees responsible for education policy. The final  
37 report shall include a recommendation on whether to eliminate or

1 continue the assessment alternative for career and technical education  
2 programs that lead to industry certification.

3 **Sec. 2.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2004 c 19 s 101 are each amended to  
4 read as follows:

5 (1) The high school assessment system shall include but need not be  
6 limited to the Washington assessment of student learning, opportunities  
7 for a student to retake the content areas of the assessment in which  
8 the student was not successful, and if approved by the legislature  
9 pursuant to subsection (11) of this section, one or more objective  
10 alternative assessments for a student to demonstrate achievement of  
11 state academic standards. The objective alternative assessments for  
12 each content area shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and  
13 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington  
14 assessment of student learning for each content area.

15 (2) Subject to the conditions in this section, a certificate of  
16 academic achievement shall be obtained by most students at about the  
17 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the students have successfully met  
18 the state standard in the content areas included in the certificate.  
19 With the exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW  
20 28A.155.045, acquisition of the certificate is required for graduation  
21 from a public high school but is not the only requirement for  
22 graduation.

23 (3) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, with the exception  
24 of students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045, a student who  
25 meets the state standards on the reading, writing, and mathematics  
26 content areas of the high school Washington assessment of student  
27 learning shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. If a  
28 student does not successfully meet the state standards in one or more  
29 content areas required for the certificate of academic achievement,  
30 then the student may retake the assessment in the content area up to  
31 four times at no cost to the student. If the student successfully  
32 meets the state standards on a retake of the assessment then the  
33 student shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. Once  
34 objective alternative assessments are authorized pursuant to subsection  
35 (11) of this section, a student may use the objective alternative  
36 assessments to demonstrate that the student successfully meets the  
37 state standards for that content area if the student has retaken the

1 Washington assessment of student learning at least once. However,  
2 students enrolled in career or technical programs that lead to industry  
3 certification may participate in an assessment alternative under  
4 section 1 of this act without retaking the Washington assessment of  
5 student learning. If the student successfully meets the state  
6 standards on the objective alternative assessments then the student  
7 shall earn a certificate of academic achievement. The student's  
8 transcript shall note whether the certificate of academic achievement  
9 was acquired by means of the Washington assessment of student learning  
10 or by an alternative assessment.

11 (4) Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, a student must  
12 meet the state standards in science in addition to the other content  
13 areas required under subsection (3) of this section on the Washington  
14 assessment of student learning or the objective alternative assessments  
15 in order to earn a certificate of academic achievement.

16 (5) The state board of education may not require the acquisition of  
17 the certificate of academic achievement for students in home-based  
18 instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW, for students enrolled in private  
19 schools under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or for students satisfying the  
20 provisions of RCW 28A.155.045.

21 (6) A student may retain and use the highest result from each  
22 successfully completed content area of the high school assessment.

23 (7) Beginning with the graduating class of 2006, the highest scale  
24 score and level achieved in each content area on the high school  
25 Washington assessment of student learning shall be displayed on a  
26 student's transcript. In addition, beginning with the graduating class  
27 of 2008, each student shall receive a scholar's designation on his or  
28 her transcript for each content area in which the student achieves  
29 level four the first time the student takes that content area  
30 assessment.

31 (8) Beginning in 2006, school districts must make available to  
32 students the following options:

33 (a) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to  
34 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the  
35 state standards if the student is enrolled in a public school; or

36 (b) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning up to  
37 four times in the content areas in which the student did not meet the  
38 state standards if the student is enrolled in a high school completion

1 program at a community or technical college. The superintendent of  
2 public instruction and the state board for community and technical  
3 colleges shall jointly identify means by which students in these  
4 programs can be assessed.

5 (9) Students who achieve the standard in a content area of the high  
6 school assessment but who wish to improve their results shall pay for  
7 retaking the assessment, using a uniform cost determined by the  
8 superintendent of public instruction.

9 (10) Subject to available funding, the superintendent shall pilot  
10 opportunities for retaking the high school assessment beginning in the  
11 2004-05 school year. Beginning no later than September 2006,  
12 opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year shall be  
13 available to each school district.

14 (11)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction  
15 shall develop options for implementing objective alternative  
16 assessments, which may include an appeals process, for students to  
17 demonstrate achievement of the state academic standards.

18 (b) The objective alternative assessments shall be comparable in  
19 rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on  
20 the Washington assessment of student learning and be objective in  
21 (~~its~~) their determination of student achievement of the state  
22 standards.

23 (c) For students enrolled in career or technical programs that lead  
24 to industry certification, successful completion of the industry  
25 certification requirements satisfy the requirements of (b) of this  
26 subsection if the programs and assessment alternatives both have been  
27 previously approved by the superintendent of public instruction and  
28 meet the requirements of section 1 of this act.

29 (d) Before any objective alternative assessments are used by a  
30 student to demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in  
31 a content area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall  
32 formally approve the use of any objective alternative assessments  
33 through the omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent  
34 resolution.

35 (12) By December 15, 2004, the house of representatives and senate  
36 education committees shall obtain information and conclusions from  
37 recognized, independent, national assessment experts regarding the

1 validity and reliability of the high school Washington assessment of  
2 student learning for making individual student high school graduation  
3 determinations.

4 (13) To help assure continued progress in academic achievement as  
5 a foundation for high school graduation and to assure that students are  
6 on track for high school graduation, each school district shall prepare  
7 plans for students as provided in this subsection (13).

8 (a) Student learning plans are required for eighth through twelfth  
9 grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content  
10 areas of the Washington assessment for student learning during the  
11 previous school year. The plan shall include the courses,  
12 competencies, and other steps needed to be taken by the student to meet  
13 state academic standards and stay on track for graduation. This  
14 requirement shall be phased in as follows:

15 (i) Beginning no later than the 2004-05 school year ninth grade  
16 students as described in this subsection (13)(a) shall have a plan.

17 (ii) Beginning no later than the 2005-06 school year and every year  
18 thereafter eighth grade students as described in this subsection  
19 (13)(a) shall have a plan.

20 (iii) The parent or guardian shall be notified, preferably through  
21 a parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington  
22 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to  
23 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student  
24 was unsuccessful, strategies to help them improve their student's  
25 skills, and the content of the student's plan.

26 (iv) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported to the  
27 student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments to the  
28 plan made as necessary.

29 (b) Beginning with the 2005-06 school year and every year  
30 thereafter, all fifth grade students who were not successful in one or  
31 more of the content areas of the fourth grade Washington assessment of  
32 student learning shall have a student learning plan.

33 (i) The parent or guardian of a student described in this  
34 subsection (13)(b) shall be notified, preferably through a parent  
35 conference, of the student's results on the Washington assessment of  
36 student learning, actions the school intends to take to improve the  
37 student's skills in any content area in which the student was

1 unsuccessful, and provide strategies to help them improve their  
2 student's skills.

3 (ii) Progress made on the student plan shall be reported to the  
4 student's parents or guardian at least annually and adjustments to the  
5 plan made as necessary.

6 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** This act takes effect August 1, 2005.

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