
SENATE BILL 6618

State of Washington

59th Legislature

2006 Regular Session

By Senators McAuliffe and Schmidt

Read first time 01/17/2006. Referred to Committee on Early Learning,
K-12 & Higher Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to the high school assessment system; and amending
2 RCW 28A.655.061.

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

4 **Sec. 1.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2004 c 19 s 101 are each amended to
5 read as follows:

6 (1) Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, the high school
7 assessment system shall (~~include but need not be limited to the~~
8 ~~Washington assessment of student learning,~~) provide certified
9 assessment options for the purpose of demonstrating a student has met
10 state learning standards. Students in the graduating classes of 2008
11 and 2009 shall have opportunities (~~for a student~~) to retake the
12 content areas of the assessment in which the student was not
13 successful, and if approved by the legislature pursuant to subsection
14 (~~(11)~~) (13) of this section, one or more (~~objective alternative~~
15 ~~assessments~~) certified assessment options for a student to demonstrate
16 achievement of state academic standards. (~~The objective alternative~~
17 ~~assessments for each content area shall be comparable in rigor to the~~
18 ~~skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the~~
19 ~~Washington assessment of student learning for each content area.~~)

1 (2) Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, students shall have the
2 option to select a certified assessment option other than the
3 Washington assessment of student learning to demonstrate that they have
4 met state learning standards in reading, math, writing, and, beginning
5 with the class of 2010, science. Certified assessment options shall
6 include but not be limited to portfolios, industry certification tests,
7 and other career and technical education assessments used to determine
8 readiness for work force entry or higher education, and college
9 entrance exams.

10 (3) Prior to the beginning of the 2007-08 school year, the state
11 board of education shall establish a procedure for certification of
12 assessment options that lead to a certificate of academic achievement.
13 Certification of assessment alternative options shall be based upon
14 demonstrated alignment with the state learning standards including
15 school to work goals. The level of student performance necessary to
16 meet state learning standards shall be comparable between all
17 assessments.

18 (4) An advisory committee shall be established by the state board
19 of education for the purpose of assisting the state board of education
20 in carrying out this section. The advisory committee shall be broadly
21 representative, including members who are educators, parents, and
22 representatives of cultural, linguistic, and racial minority groups,
23 and the community of persons with disabilities. In developing the
24 process for certification of assessment options the state board of
25 education shall:

26 (a) Review national tests including, but not limited to, the
27 scholastic aptitude test, SAT subject tests, preliminary scholastic
28 aptitude test, ACT assessment, advanced placement, and career skill
29 certification exams to determine whether students performing at
30 specified levels on such tests have demonstrated that they meet state
31 learning standards in one or more of the following areas: Reading,
32 writing, math, or science;

33 (b) With assistance from a nationally recognized center affiliated
34 with a nonprofit or public university that has conducted national
35 research and evaluation of high school assessments, evaluate research
36 and analyze existing assessment methods and systems in other states,
37 including but not limited to those states that have added multiple
38 measures to existing state developed tests and those states that have

1 moved from the use of state developed tests to other assessment
2 methods. Such analysis shall include: (i) The effects of assessments
3 referenced in (a) of this subsection and other measures including
4 portfolios on improvement of student performance; (ii) the
5 disaggregation of results for subgroups within the population; (iii)
6 the cost of the assessments or other measures on a per student basis
7 and the need for additional instructional resources; and (iv) the
8 ability of the assessment or other measure to provide necessary
9 diagnostic information for the improvement of instruction;

10 (c) With assistance from a nationally recognized center for
11 multicultural education, identify and adopt or develop culturally
12 relevant assessments for students from demographic groups that have
13 significant difficulty with the Washington assessment of student
14 learning and are overrepresented as failures under the current
15 assessment system. Such assessment options shall be aligned with the
16 state learning standards and shall be comparable to other certified
17 assessment options;

18 (d) Review the electronic portfolios developed in Washington state
19 to determine whether this method of collecting and presenting student
20 work can be adapted for cost-effective use as a certified assessment
21 alternatives option; and

22 (e) Review internship, service learning, and apprenticeship models
23 to determine whether they can be used as an assessment option for some
24 or all of the required areas.

25 (5) Subject to the conditions in this section, a certificate of
26 academic achievement shall be obtained by most students at about the
27 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the students have successfully met
28 the state standard in the content areas included in the certificate.
29 With the exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW
30 28A.155.045, acquisition of the certificate is required for graduation
31 from a public high school but is not the only requirement for
32 graduation. The graduation requirement in this section shall apply
33 when the state board of education has certified at least three
34 assessment options as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this
35 section, the legislature has approved the certification process as
36 provided in subsection (13) of this section, and students have been
37 given at least one academic year to complete an assessment option to
38 obtain a certificate of academic achievement.

1 ~~((3))~~ (6) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008, with the
2 exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045, a
3 student who meets the state standards on the reading, writing, and
4 mathematics content areas of the high school Washington assessment of
5 student learning or other certified assessment option shall earn a
6 certificate of academic achievement. If a student does not
7 successfully meet the state standards in one or more content areas
8 required for the certificate of academic achievement, then the student
9 may retake the assessment in the content area up to four times at no
10 cost to the student. If the student successfully meets the state
11 standards on a retake of the assessment then the student shall earn a
12 certificate of academic achievement. Once ~~((objective alternative
13 assessments))~~ certified assessment options are authorized pursuant to
14 subsection ~~((11))~~ (13) of this section, a student may use the
15 ~~((objective alternative assessments))~~ certified assessment options to
16 demonstrate that the student successfully meets the state standards for
17 that content area ~~((if the student has retaken the Washington
18 assessment of student learning at least once. If the student
19 successfully meets the state standards on the objective alternative
20 assessments then the student shall earn a certificate of academic
21 achievement. The student's transcript shall note whether the
22 certificate of academic achievement was acquired by means of the
23 Washington assessment of student learning or by an alternative
24 assessment))~~.

25 ~~((4))~~ (7) Beginning with the graduating class of 2010, a student
26 must meet the state standards in science in addition to the other
27 content areas required under subsection ~~((3))~~ (6) of this section on
28 the Washington assessment of student learning or ~~((the objective
29 alternative assessments))~~ certified assessment options in order to earn
30 a certificate of academic achievement.

31 ~~((5))~~ (8) The state board of education may not require the
32 acquisition of the certificate of academic achievement for students in
33 home-based instruction under chapter 28A.200 RCW, for students enrolled
34 in private schools under chapter 28A.195 RCW, or for students
35 satisfying the provisions of RCW 28A.155.045.

36 ~~((6))~~ (9) A student may retain and use the highest result from
37 each successfully completed content area of the high school assessment.

1 ~~((7) Beginning with the graduating class of 2006, the highest~~
2 ~~scale score and level achieved in each content area on the high school~~
3 ~~Washington assessment of student learning shall be displayed on a~~
4 ~~student's transcript. In addition, beginning with the graduating class~~
5 ~~of 2008, each student shall receive a scholar's designation on his or~~
6 ~~her transcript for each content area in which the student achieves~~
7 ~~level four the first time the student takes that content area~~
8 ~~assessment.~~

9 ~~(8))~~ (10) Beginning in 2006, school districts must make available
10 to students the following options:

11 (a) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning or
12 certified assessment option up to four times in the content areas in
13 which the student did not meet the state standards if the student is
14 enrolled in a public school; or

15 (b) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning or
16 certified assessment option up to four times in the content areas in
17 which the student did not meet the state standards if the student is
18 enrolled in a high school completion program at a community or
19 technical college. The superintendent of public instruction and the
20 state board for community and technical colleges shall jointly identify
21 means by which students in these programs can be assessed.

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

26 ~~(10))~~ (11) Beginning in 2007, school districts must permit
27 students to choose a certified option for demonstrating they meet state
28 learning standards in order to obtain a certificate of academic
29 achievement.

30 (a) Districts must make the certified assessment options available
31 to all high school students within the district.

32 (b) Districts shall permit students to choose a certified
33 assessment option prior to the time they take the high school
34 Washington assessment of student learning.

35 (12) Subject to available funding, the superintendent shall pilot
36 opportunities for retaking the high school assessment beginning in the
37 2004-05 school year. Beginning no later than September 2006,

1 opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year shall be
2 available to each school district.

3 ~~((11) The office of the superintendent of public instruction shall
4 develop options for implementing objective alternative assessments,
5 which may include an appeals process, for students to demonstrate
6 achievement of the state academic standards. The objective alternative
7 assessments shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge
8 that the student must demonstrate on the Washington assessment of
9 student learning and be objective in its determination of student
10 achievement of the state standards.))~~

11 (13) The state board of education shall establish a procedure for
12 certification of assessment options for students to demonstrate
13 achievement of the state academic standards. Before any ~~((objective~~
14 ~~alternative assessments))~~ certified assessment options are used by a
15 student to demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in
16 a content area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall
17 formally approve ~~((the use of any objective alternative assessments))~~
18 the process for certifying and adopting assessment options through the
19 omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent resolution.

20 ~~((12))~~ (14) By December 15, 2004, the house of representatives
21 and senate education committees shall obtain information and
22 conclusions from recognized, independent, national assessment experts
23 regarding the validity and reliability of the high school Washington
24 assessment of student learning for making individual student high
25 school graduation determinations.

26 ~~((13))~~ (15) To help assure continued progress in academic
27 achievement as a foundation for high school graduation and to assure
28 that students are on track for high school graduation, each school
29 district shall prepare plans for students as provided in this
30 subsection ~~((13))~~ (15).

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

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

4 (ii) Beginning no later than the 2005-06 school year and every year
5 thereafter eighth grade students as described in this subsection
6 (~~((+13))~~) (15)(a) shall have a plan.

7 (iii) The parent or guardian shall be notified, preferably through
8 a parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington
9 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to
10 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student
11 was unsuccessful, strategies to help them improve their student's
12 skills, and the content of the student's plan.

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

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

20 (i) The parent or guardian of a student described in this
21 subsection (~~((+13))~~) (15)(b) shall be notified, preferably through a
22 parent conference, of the student's results on the Washington
23 assessment of student learning, actions the school intends to take to
24 improve the student's skills in any content area in which the student
25 was unsuccessful, and provide strategies to help them improve their
26 student's skills.

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

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