
Education Committee

HB 3113

Brief Description: Regarding state and local requirements for high school graduation.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos and Hasegawa.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Extends the policy that students in the graduating classes of 2008 through 2012 can graduate without a Certificate of Academic Achievement by meeting other graduation requirements and taking additional courses to include students who have not met the state standard in reading and writing.
- Authorizes local school districts to require students to meet the state standard in reading or writing on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) or an alternative assessment, but only if there is a less than 5 percent achievement gap on WASL scores between subgroups of students in the district.

Hearing Date: 2/4/08

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Graduation Requirements. The State Board of Education (SBE) is charged with adopting state high school graduation requirements. Current requirements include successful completion of course credits in specified subjects, a high school and beyond plan, and a culminating project. Local school districts can adopt additional requirements for students to earn a diploma, such as additional credits, a minimum Grade Point Average, or service learning.

Certificate of Academic Achievement. An additional state graduation requirement created by the Legislature is that, beginning with the class of 2008, most students will be required to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA). Students earn a CAA by meeting the state standard on the high school Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) or an approved

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alternative assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students who are in special education may earn a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA).

In 2007, the Legislature approved a temporary policy that permits students in the classes of 2008 through at least 2012, who have not met the state standard in mathematics to graduate without a CAA if they:

1. have met the state standard in reading and writing;
2. have met all other state and local graduation requirements;
3. continue taking the mathematics WASL or an alternative at least once annually until graduation; and
4. earn additional course credits in mathematics or a career and technical course equivalent. Students in the class of 2008 must earn one additional credit after 11th grade and students in the other classes must earn two additional credits after 10th grade.

Class of 2008. According to data from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, approximately 85 percent of students in the class of 2008 who were juniors in the spring of 2007 have met the state standard in reading and writing. The results among student subgroups are disproportionate, however. For example, 70.8 percent of Hispanic students have met the standard, and 72.9 percent of low income students have met the standard.

Summary of Bill:

The policy that allows students in the graduating classes of 2008 through 2012 to graduate without a CAA or CIA if they have not met the state standard in mathematics, but meet other graduation requirements and earn additional course credits, is extended to students who do not meet the state standard in reading or writing.

A school district is authorized to adopt a local graduation requirement that students meet the state standard on the high school reading or writing WASL or an approved alternative assessment if less than a five percentage point gap exists between the highest scoring group of students and the scores of any other subgroup of students. A separate calculation is made for reading and writing based on the district's high school WASL scores. A "subgroup of students" means White, Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, Hispanic, Black, low income, and special education students.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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