
SUBSTITUTE HOUSE BILL 2915

State of Washington 61st Legislature 2010 Regular Session

By House Education (originally sponsored by Representatives Quall, Santos, Van De Wege, Kenney, and Wallace; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction)

READ FIRST TIME 02/03/10.

1 AN ACT Relating to high school mathematics and science graduation
2 requirements; amending RCW 28A.655.0611 and 28A.655.061; adding a new
3 section to chapter 28A.655 RCW; and creating new sections.

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

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that major changes
6 recently have been made in the state's K-12 mathematics and science
7 standards and assessments. These changes will require significant
8 adjustments to what teachers must teach, to expectations of what
9 students should know, to which instructional materials should be used,
10 and to how students are assessed.

11 The legislature further finds that the new mathematics end-of-
12 course tests are under development and will not be administered until
13 spring 2011. Many students in the classes of 2013 and 2014 will have
14 already taken algebra I or integrated mathematics I at least one or two
15 years before these tests are available.

16 The legislature further finds that a decision has not yet been made
17 whether to continue with a comprehensive science assessment or move to
18 end-of-course assessments. This decision is fundamental to the

1 timeline and instructional strategies needed for implementing the
2 science graduation requirement.

3 The legislature further finds that the courts have consistently
4 ruled that states may require students to pass state-level assessments
5 to graduate, but must ensure that the assessments are reliable and
6 valid and that students have had an adequate opportunity to learn the
7 skills and knowledge being assessed.

8 It is therefore the intent of the legislature to postpone when high
9 school students must meet the high school mathematics and science
10 standards as a graduation requirement. This postponement will allow
11 time for teachers to understand and apply the new standards and to
12 obtain and use aligned instructional materials. It will also provide
13 the time required for the assessments to be developed and administered
14 in the year in which students actually complete the specific
15 mathematics or science course being assessed, and ensure students will
16 have an opportunity to learn the mathematics and science assessments
17 being assessed.

18 **PART I**

19 **MATHEMATICS GRADUATION REQUIREMENT**

20 **Sec. 101.** RCW 28A.655.0611 and 2009 c 17 s 1 are each amended to
21 read as follows:

22 (1) Beginning with the graduating class of 2008 and through no
23 later than the graduating class of ((2012)) 2014, students may graduate
24 from high school without earning a certificate of academic achievement
25 or a certificate of individual achievement if they:

26 (a) Have not successfully met the mathematics standard on the high
27 school Washington assessment of student learning, an approved objective
28 alternative assessment, or an alternate assessment developed for
29 eligible special education students;

30 (b) Have successfully met the state standard in the other content
31 areas required for a certificate under RCW 28A.655.061 or 28A.155.045;

32 (c) Have met all other state and school district graduation
33 requirements; and

34 (d)(i) For the graduating class of 2008, successfully earn one high
35 school mathematics credit or career and technical course equivalent,
36 including courses offered at skill centers, after the student's

1 eleventh grade year intended to increase the student's mathematics
2 proficiency toward meeting or exceeding the mathematics standards
3 assessed on the high school Washington assessment of student learning;
4 and

5 (ii) For the remaining graduating classes under this section,
6 successfully earn two mathematics credits or career and technical
7 course equivalent, including courses offered at skill centers, after
8 the student's tenth grade year intended to increase the student's
9 mathematics proficiency toward meeting or exceeding the mathematics
10 standards assessed on the high school Washington assessment of student
11 learning.

12 ~~(2) ((The state board of education may adopt a rule that ends the
13 application of this section with a graduating class before the
14 graduating class of 2012, if the state board of education adopts the
15 rule by September 1st of the freshman school year of the graduating
16 class to which the provisions of this section no longer apply. The
17 state board of education's authority under this section does not alter
18 the requirement that any change in performance standards for the tenth
19 grade assessment must comply with RCW 28A.305.130.))~~

20 (3) This section expires August 31, ((2013)) 2015.

21 **PART II**

22 **SCIENCE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT**

23 **Sec. 201.** RCW 28A.655.061 and 2009 c 524 s 5 are each amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (1) The high school assessment system shall include but need not be
26 limited to the Washington assessment of student learning, opportunities
27 for a student to retake the content areas of the assessment in which
28 the student was not successful, and if approved by the legislature
29 pursuant to subsection (10) of this section, one or more objective
30 alternative assessments for a student to demonstrate achievement of
31 state academic standards. The objective alternative assessments for
32 each content area shall be comparable in rigor to the skills and
33 knowledge that the student must demonstrate on the Washington
34 assessment of student learning for each content area.

35 (2) Subject to the conditions in this section, a certificate of
36 academic achievement shall be obtained by most students at about the

1 age of sixteen, and is evidence that the students have successfully met
2 the state standard in the content areas included in the certificate.
3 With the exception of students satisfying the provisions of RCW
4 28A.155.045 or 28A.655.0611, acquisition of the certificate is required
5 for graduation from a public high school but is not the only
6 requirement for graduation.

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

26 (4) Beginning no later than with the graduating class of ~~((2013))~~
27 2017, a student must meet the state standards in science on at least
28 two of the science end-of-course assessments in section 202 of this act
29 in addition to the other content areas required under subsection (3) of
30 this section on the Washington assessment of student learning or the
31 objective alternative assessments in order to earn a certificate of
32 academic achievement. ~~((The state board of education may adopt a rule~~
33 ~~that implements the requirements of this subsection (4) beginning with~~
34 ~~a graduating class before the graduating class of 2013, if the state~~
35 ~~board of education adopts the rule by September 1st of the freshman~~
36 ~~school year of the graduating class to which the requirements of this~~
37 ~~subsection (4) apply. The state board of education's authority under~~

1 ~~this subsection (4) does not alter the requirement that any change in~~
2 ~~performance standards for the tenth grade assessment must comply with~~
3 ~~RCW 28A.305.130.)~~

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

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

11 (7) School districts must make available to students the following
12 options:

13 (a) To retake the Washington assessment of student learning (~~up to~~
14 ~~four times~~) twice per year in the content areas in which the student
15 did not meet the state standards if the student is enrolled in a public
16 school; or

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

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

28 (9) Opportunities to retake the assessment at least twice a year
29 shall be available to each school district.

30 (10)(a) The office of the superintendent of public instruction
31 shall develop options for implementing objective alternative
32 assessments, which may include an appeals process for students' scores,
33 for students to demonstrate achievement of the state academic
34 standards. The objective alternative assessments shall be comparable
35 in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate
36 on the Washington assessment of student learning and be objective in
37 its determination of student achievement of the state standards.
38 Before any objective alternative assessments in addition to those

1 authorized in RCW 28A.655.065 or (b) of this subsection are used by a
2 student to demonstrate that the student has met the state standards in
3 a content area required to obtain a certificate, the legislature shall
4 formally approve the use of any objective alternative assessments
5 through the omnibus appropriations act or by statute or concurrent
6 resolution.

7 (b)(i) A student's score on the mathematics, reading or English, or
8 writing portion of the SAT or the ACT may be used as an objective
9 alternative assessment under this section for demonstrating that a
10 student has met or exceeded the state standards for the certificate of
11 academic achievement. The state board of education shall identify the
12 scores students must achieve on the relevant portion of the SAT or ACT
13 to meet or exceed the state standard in the relevant content area on
14 the Washington assessment of student learning. The state board of
15 education shall identify the first scores by December 1, 2007. After
16 the first scores are established, the state board may increase but not
17 decrease the scores required for students to meet or exceed the state
18 standards.

19 (ii) Until August 31, 2008, a student's score on the mathematics
20 portion of the PSAT may be used as an objective alternative assessment
21 under this section for demonstrating that a student has met or exceeded
22 the state standard for the certificate of academic achievement. The
23 state board of education shall identify the score students must achieve
24 on the mathematics portion of the PSAT to meet or exceed the state
25 standard in that content area on the Washington assessment of student
26 learning.

27 (iii) A student who scores at least a three on the grading scale of
28 one to five for selected AP examinations may use the score as an
29 objective alternative assessment under this section for demonstrating
30 that a student has met or exceeded state standards for the certificate
31 of academic achievement. A score of three on the AP examinations in
32 calculus or statistics may be used as an alternative assessment for the
33 mathematics portion of the Washington assessment of student learning.
34 A score of three on the AP examinations in English language and
35 composition may be used as an alternative assessment for the writing
36 portion of the Washington assessment of student learning. A score of
37 three on the AP examinations in English literature and composition,
38 macroeconomics, microeconomics, psychology, United States history,

1 world history, United States government and politics, or comparative
2 government and politics may be used as an alternative assessment for
3 the reading portion of the Washington assessment of student learning.
4 A score of three on the AP examinations in biology, chemistry, physics,
5 or environmental sciences may be used as an alternative assessment for
6 the science portion of the Washington assessment of student learning.

7 ~~(11) ((By December 15, 2004, the house of representatives and~~
8 ~~senate education committees shall obtain information and conclusions~~
9 ~~from recognized, independent, national assessment experts regarding the~~
10 ~~validity and reliability of the high school Washington assessment of~~
11 ~~student learning for making individual student high school graduation~~
12 ~~determinations.~~

13 ~~(12))~~ To help assure continued progress in academic achievement as
14 a foundation for high school graduation and to assure that students are
15 on track for high school graduation, each school district shall prepare
16 plans for and notify students and their parents or legal guardians as
17 provided in this subsection (~~((12))~~) (11).

18 (a) Student learning plans are required for eighth through twelfth
19 grade students who were not successful on any or all of the content
20 areas of the Washington assessment for student learning during the
21 previous school year or who may not be on track to graduate due to
22 credit deficiencies or absences. The parent or legal guardian shall be
23 notified about the information in the student learning plan, preferably
24 through a parent conference and at least annually. To the extent
25 feasible, schools serving English language learner students and their
26 parents shall translate the plan into the primary language of the
27 family. The plan shall include the following information as
28 applicable:

29 (i) The student's results on the Washington assessment of student
30 learning;

31 (ii) If the student is in the transitional bilingual program, the
32 score on his or her Washington language proficiency test II;

33 (iii) Any credit deficiencies;

34 (iv) The student's attendance rates over the previous two years;

35 (v) The student's progress toward meeting state and local
36 graduation requirements;

37 (vi) The courses, competencies, and other steps needed to be taken

1 by the student to meet state academic standards and stay on track for
2 graduation;

3 (vii) Remediation strategies and alternative education options
4 available to students, including informing students of the option to
5 continue to receive instructional services after grade twelve or until
6 the age of twenty-one;

7 (viii) The alternative assessment options available to students
8 under this section and RCW 28A.655.065;

9 (ix) School district programs, high school courses, and career and
10 technical education options available for students to meet graduation
11 requirements; and

12 (x) Available programs offered through skill centers or community
13 and technical colleges, including the college high school diploma
14 options under RCW 28B.50.535.

15 (b) All fifth grade students who were not successful in one or more
16 of the content areas of the fourth grade Washington assessment of
17 student learning shall have a student learning plan.

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

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

27 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 202.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.655
28 RCW to read as follows:

29 In consultation with the state board of education, the
30 superintendent of public instruction shall develop statewide end-of-
31 course assessments for biology, physical sciences, and earth sciences
32 that measure student achievement of the state science standards in
33 these content areas and in the cross-cutting principles that pertain to
34 all science disciplines, such as systems, inquiry, and application.
35 The superintendent shall take steps to ensure that the language of the
36 assessments is responsive to a diverse student population. The first

1 two of these assessments shall be implemented statewide in the 2011-12
2 school year. The third of these assessments shall be implemented
3 statewide in the 2012-13 school year.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 203.** By December 1, 2013, the superintendent of
5 public instruction, in consultation with the state board of education,
6 shall submit a report to the governor and education committees of the
7 house of representatives and senate on the implementation of the
8 science standards and the end-of-course science assessments. The
9 report shall include the actions that were taken to disseminate the
10 high school science standards to high school science teachers, to what
11 extent teachers and students had access to aligned instructional
12 materials, and the results of the assessments. In addition, the report
13 shall include whether, in the judgment of the superintendent, the
14 assessments will be sufficiently valid and reliable and whether
15 students in the class of 2017 will have a reasonable opportunity to
16 learn the standards being measured on the assessments. Based on these
17 findings, the superintendent shall make a recommendation whether
18 students in the class of 2017 should be required to meet one or more of
19 the standards on the science assessments to graduate or whether the
20 requirement should be postponed.

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