
Education Committee

HB 1410

Brief Description: Regarding science end-of-course assessments.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Dammeier, Probst and Liias; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Directs the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to develop and implement end-of-course assessments (EOCs) for high school science in Biology, Physical Science, and Integrated Science, and specifies implementation dates.
- Requires students beginning with the class of 2017, rather than the class of 2013, to meet the state standard on one high school science EOC to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement for purposes of graduation.
- Phases-in use of the science EOCs for graduation, starting with Biology for the class of 2017 and adding the additional EOCs as options for later classes.

Hearing Date: 2/1/11

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

In 2008 legislation was enacted to change the state high school mathematics assessment from a comprehensive assessment to a series of end-of-course assessments (EOCs) beginning in the 2009-10 school year. The mathematics EOCs cover first-year high school mathematics (Algebra I and Integrated I) and second-year mathematics (Geometry and Integrated II).

The current high school science assessment is a comprehensive assessment. Beginning with the graduating class of 2013, students will be required to meet the state standard on the high school science assessment to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement, which is required for graduation.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Legislature has authorized alternative assessments for students who do not meet the standard on state assessments. For example, students may substitute a score of three -on specified AP exams covering English, language arts, and mathematics. None of the AP exams currently authorized are in science.

A budget proviso in the 2010 supplemental operating budget directed the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to develop an EOC for high school science in the content area of Biology, to be implemented in the 2011-12 school year. The proviso also required the SPI to recommend whether additional science EOCs should be developed and in which content areas, and to recommend an implementation schedule for the other EOCs. Washington's science learning standards were revised in 2009 and include content in life, physical, and earth and space sciences. The standards also include the study of systems, inquiry, and application that cuts across content areas.

In a report submitted in December 2010, the SPI recommends development of two additional EOCs, in Physical Science and Integrated Science. The SPI recommends that, for purposes of high school graduation, students be required to meet the state standard on one of the science EOCs. The report also recommends delaying the implementation of the graduation requirement in science to the class of 2017.

Summary of Bill:

In consultation with the State Board of Education, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must develop state end-of-course assessments (EOCs) for high school science. To the extent possible, the development must be in cooperation with other states. An EOC in Biology must be administered beginning in the 2011-12 school year. An EOC in Physical Science must be administered beginning in the 2014-15 school year, and an additional EOC in Integrated Science covering life, physical, and earth and space sciences must be administered beginning in the 2015-16 school year. Each of the EOCs must also measure standards pertaining to systems, inquiry, and application of the science content area.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2017, rather than the class of 2013, students must meet the state standard on the high school science assessment to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA), which is required for graduation. The state science assessment for the class of 2017 is specified as the Biology EOC. Beginning with the class of 2018, students must meet the state standard on either the Biology EOC or the Physical Science EOC to earn a CAA. Beginning with the class of 2019, a third EOC option is added in Integrated Science.

Students who do not meet the state standard on the science EOC may substitute a score of three on the AP exams in Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Science, or Physics as an approved alternative assessment.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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