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## Education Committee

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### HB 1519

**Brief Description:** Regarding school assessments for students with cognitive disabilities.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Hope, Dunshee, Anderson, Haler, Pettigrew, Fagan, Sells, Johnson, Orwall, Haigh, Kenney, Kelley and Ormsby.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement, or contract with a third party to develop and implement, a meaningful common-task assessment that requires less time to develop and individualize than the current portfolio assessment.

**Hearing Date:** 2/10/11

**Staff:** Cece Clynch (786-7195).

#### Background:

The Washington Alternate Assessment System (WAAS) is an alternate assessment that is an option only for students with significant cognitive challenges. The term “significantly cognitively challenged” is a designation applied to a small number of students, generally 10 percent or less of those eligible for special education and related services, participating in the statewide testing program.

The decision about how a special education student participates in the statewide assessment system is an individualized educational program (IEP) team decision. There is no limit on the number of students in a district to whom the WAAS can be administered. There is a limit, however, upon the number of students who successfully pass the WAAS that can be counted for federal adequate yearly progress (AYP) purposes. This cap is one percent of the total student population being tested in the required grades for the state and one percent of the total student population being tested in the required grades for each district.

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*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 WAAS is a portfolio assessment that is individualized by a teacher for each individual student and is consistent with the IEP which forms the basis of instruction for that student. A common-task assessment, by contrast, provides a specified test map, along with items or tasks that provide the same basis for scoring and interpreting results.

**Summary of Bill:**

The Legislature finds that one of the difficult issues facing states and districts across the country is the inclusion of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in their state assessment and accountability systems. Assessing academic knowledge and skills of students with unique and significant cognitive disabilities is not only challenging and time consuming, but such assessments may provide only limited information.

As soon as possible, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction must develop and implement, or contract with a third party to develop and implement, a meaningful common-task assessment that requires less time to develop and individualize than the current portfolio 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.