
Education Committee

HB 1703

Brief Description: Modifying the high school assessment system by changing the administration of alternative assessments, continuing the requirement for students to demonstrate achievement of state academic standards to earn a high school diploma, and aligning the system with career and college ready graduation requirements.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos and Pollet; by request of Office of Financial Management.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides that after the 2014-15 school year the state will no longer administer the mathematics End of Course (EOC) assessments or the tenth grade assessment for reading and writing or English Language Arts (ELA).
- Requires that the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) provide guidelines for administering objective alternatives to the assessments, rather than develop options for implementing objective alternative assessments and directs school districts to implement the objective alternatives, including evaluation of the Collection of Evidence (COE) which is to be evaluated at the district level.
- Provides an additional objective alternative in the form of college readiness transition courses for mathematics, English and science.

Hearing Date: 2/3/15

Staff: Cece Clynch (786-7195).

Background:

Statewide Student Assessment System.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the State Board of Education (SBE), is authorized to maintain and revise a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and to use for purposes of state and federal accountability. The state assessment system must cover the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years. The federal

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Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades three through eight and one high school grade, as well as science in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school.

Most recently, high school mathematics has been assessed using end-of-course tests (EOCs) in Algebra I and Geometry, while a 10th grade reading and writing assessment has been utilized. In 2011, legislation directed that high school science be assessed using a Biology EOC. Subsequently, the Legislature expressed intent to transition from a Biology EOC to a comprehensive science assessment.

In 2013, the SPI was directed to implement student assessments developed with a multistate consortium in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics, beginning in the 2014-15 school year. (Washington is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, known as SBAC.) The SPI was also directed to use test items from the SBAC assessments to develop a 10th grade ELA assessment and modify the Algebra I and Geometry EOCs for use through the transition period.

The SBE is responsible for establishing the performance scores that students must meet on state assessments. By the end of the 2014-15 school year, the SBE must establish performance scores for the assessments used during the transition period, as well as the SBAC assessments. In setting scores for the high school SBAC assessments, the SBE must review the experience during the transition period, examine scores used in other states for the SBAC assessments, including states that require passage of an 11th grade assessment for graduation. The scores established for purposes of graduation may be different from the scores used for the purpose of determining career and college readiness.

High School Graduation.

A Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) is one of the requirements for graduation from a Washington public high school. To obtain a CAA, a student must meet state standards on required assessments. Students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system, even with accommodations, may earn a CIA via a variety of ways to demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with their individual education programs.

Since the graduating class of 2008, Washington students have been required to meet the state standard on the assessment in reading and writing to obtain a CAA and graduate from high school. Students in the graduating classes of 2013 and 2014 have also had to meet the standard in at least one of the mathematics EOCs. Beginning with the graduating class of 2015, students will have to meet the standard on the state assessment in reading, writing, at least one of the mathematics EOCs, and the Biology EOC for high school graduation. Beginning with the graduating class of 2019, the SBAC assessments in the ELA and mathematics will be used to demonstrate that students meet the state standard in those subjects.

Below is a chart illustrating the assessments required for the graduating class of 2015 and beyond:

Graduating Class	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
2015	10th Grade Reading & Writing	Algebra I EOC Or Geometry EOC	Biology EOC
2016	10th Grade Reading & Writing Or 11th Grade ELA (Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium or SBAC)	Algebra I EOC Or Geometry EOC Or 11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Biology EOC
2017	10th Grade ELA Or 11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	Algebra I EOC Or Geometry EOC Or 11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Biology EOC
2018	10th Grade ELA Or 11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	Algebra I EOC Or Geometry EOC Or 11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Biology EOC
2019	11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Biology EOC

Alternative Assessment Options.

Alternative assessment options exist to earn a CAA for those who have taken an assessment at least once. These include:

- Grade comparison.
- Earning a high enough score on the SAT or ACT.
- Earning a high enough score on an Advanced Placement (AP)/International Baccalaureate (IB) exam.
- Collection of evidence, scored at the state level or by regional panels of educators.

There are also provisions for waiving specific requirements pertaining to the CAA and the CIA for students who transferred to a Washington public school in their junior or senior year or who have special, unavoidable circumstances.

Assessments, Transition Courses, and College Placement.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and Washington's public baccalaureate institutions have signed agreements on the use of the SBAC assessments as evidence of college readiness. College ready scores of three or four on these assessments will allow first year college students who have been admitted to one of Washington's public colleges or universities to be placed into entry-level college mathematics and English courses without further placement testing. Students must take placement exams for higher level course placement, such as a calculus track.

In addition, transition courses are being developed and piloted in English Language Arts and mathematics for students who score a one or a two on the assessment. These courses will develop college and career readiness. A senior in high school who scores below a college ready level on an SBAC assessment will be able to enroll in the transition course and, if he or she earns a B or better, be placed into an entry-level college course in that subject.

Summary of Bill:

After the 2014-15 school year, the state will no longer administer the mathematics EOCs, or the tenth grade assessments for reading and writing, or the ELA. Students who took these assessments before or during that year may use the results for purposes of graduation, however. Students in the graduating class of 2018 may use the results from the SBAC ELA together with the mathematics EOCs or the SBAC mathematics assessment. The option currently available to this graduating class to use the 10th grade ELA developed by the SPI is eliminated.

The duty to develop options for implementing objective alternative assessments no longer rests with the SPI. Rather, the SPI must provide guidelines for administering objective alternatives. Language is stricken that would require legislative approval for the use of objective alternative assessments.

School districts, rather than the SPI, must implement the objective alternatives in areas where students have not met state standard. The Collection of Evidence (COE) is to be evaluated at the district level pursuant to SPI guidelines. If the district awards the COE the minimum required score, the applicant must be deemed to have met state standards. Deadlines are set forth by which COE information must be provided to students, families, and teachers.

Additional alternatives, in the form of college readiness transition courses, are added in mathematics and English. Beginning in 2017-18, a transition course for science is added as well. The SPI, Student Achievement Council, SBE, State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Council of Presidents must annually publish a memorandum detailing the requirements for these courses. By January 1, 2016, the SPI must offer online transition courses in mathematics and English. By September 1, 2017, an online transition course in science must be available.

A district that offers the COE alternative is not required to offer the college transition course alternatives.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on 9/1/15.