

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SHB 2429

As Passed House:
February 15, 2016

Title: An act relating to providing assessment results to students and their parents or guardians.

Brief Description: Concerning the provision of assessment results to students and their parents or guardians.

Sponsors: House Committee on Appropriations (originally sponsored by Representatives Caldier, Reykdal, Magendanz, Ortiz-Self, Young, McBride, McCaslin, Muri, Kilduff, Pollet and Santos).

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/26/16, 2/4/16 [DP];
Appropriations: 2/8/16, 2/9/16 [DPS].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/15/16, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement a process for ensuring that school districts are able to provide students and their parents or guardians with the results of specified statewide high school assessments by a certain date.
- Requires districts to provide students and their parents or guardians with the results of specified statewide high school assessments no later than the subsequent June 15 after the student takes the assessment, beginning with assessments taken during or after the 2016-17 school year.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 21 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Ortiz-Self, Vice Chair; Reykdal, Vice Chair; Magendanz, Ranking Minority Member; Muri, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Stambaugh, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Griffey, Hargrove, Harris, Hayes, S. Hunt, Kilduff, Klippert, Kuderer, McCaslin, Orwall, Pollet, Rossetti and Springer.

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.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 32 members: Representatives Dunshee, Chair; Ormsby, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Parker, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Wilcox, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Buys, Cody, Condotta, Dent, Fitzgibbon, Haler, Hansen, Harris, Hudgins, S. Hunt, Jinkins, Kagi, Lytton, MacEwen, Magendanz, Pettigrew, Robinson, Sawyer, Schmick, Senn, Springer, Stokesbary, Sullivan, Taylor, Tharinger, Van Werven and Walkinshaw.

Staff: Jessica Harrell (786-7349).

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 Elementary and Secondary Education Act requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades 3 through 8 and one high school grade, as well as in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school in science.

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 grade 10 ELA assessment and modify the Algebra I and Geometry end-of-course assessments for use through the transition period.

The results of the SBAC assessments taken online and on paper in the 2014-15 school year were available to teachers and administrators by July 1, 2015. Printed reports for parents were delivered to schools by September 10, 2015. The SPI's contract with the vendor of the assessments provides that the results of online assessments will be available within three weeks of the administration of the assessment, and that the results of paper assessments will be available within four weeks of the vendor's receipt of the tests.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The SPI must develop and implement a process for ensuring that school districts are able to provide students and their parents or guardians with the results of the state assessments listed below, no later than the subsequent June 15 after the student takes the assessment.

For the following statewide high school assessments taken during or after the 2016-17 school year, school districts must provide students and their parents or guardians with the results of the assessments no later than the subsequent June 15 after the student takes the assessment:

- the grade 10 ELA assessment developed by the SPI using resources from the multistate consortium;
- the ELA assessment developed with the multistate consortium; and
- the comprehensive mathematics assessment developed with the multistate consortium.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Education):

(In support) Teachers, students and their families complain that they do not receive the results of the statewide tests until late in the summer or well into the school year.

The results are often not available until after the students are placed in courses. In many districts, course registration begins early in the year and is adjusted at the beginning of summer after assessment results are released. It is more difficult to adjust course plans based on test results if the scores do not come back until summer or fall. This means that some students are not placed in the appropriate courses, as suggested by their assessment results. Late results can mean that students are not placed into the proper remedial courses or summer school courses. And when the results come back late and indicate that students need to be moved to other courses, sometimes they are unable to do so because classes are full.

Students do not like to have their courses switched around midterm. Teachers do not like to have students placed in their courses mid-term. Because of the link between assessment scores and graduation requirements, the late results can affect the likelihood that some students will be able to graduate on time. For senior students planning to graduate, if assessment results are not available before the end of June, then schools have to hold the students' diplomas and the students cannot move on with their lives.

Some teachers think that the SBAC is more expensive, but, when they were first told about it, they thought it was going to be better and that the results would come back within three or four weeks of administering the assessments.

Teachers are required to evaluate the assessment results of their students in a variety of ways to determine whether their teaching strategies are effective. When the results come in late, the teachers have to go in blindly to the next year of teaching, and do not benefit from knowing whether the strategies they employed the previous year were successful or need to be modified.

There are financial and time costs to state assessments. Many districts made a commitment to administer assessments online, so that their teachers and students would receive the results in a timely fashion. However, the results did not come back in a timely fashion.

This bill attempts to solve a real problem, but with all of the best intentions, the June 15 date may or may not work. Because standardized assessments results are so high stakes for schools and students, most teachers are pleased with the bill's goal to add accountability for when assessment results must be made available. The big question that is not answered in the bill is what happens if the results do not come back by the deadline. What if late results were off limits for use in school and student accountability for that year, off limits to penalize students who do not pass, and off limits to make high stakes decisions. Instead use teacher assessments, course grades, and other timely and valid evidence that is already available to determine what supports and interventions students need. This bill raises the question of the feasibility of waiting for assessment results to do such things as assign courses for the following year.

(Opposed) Schools and families need assessment results as quickly as possible, but mid-June is too early to require the results be made available, because some schools are still testing in June. Last year some schools got their results in the promised three to four weeks. Due to some first year implementation problems, many results were delayed, but all schools received the online scores by July 1.

The last day of the assessment administration window this year is June 10. Even though the scoring vendor says it will be able to meet the three-week turn around for online assessments, the June 15 reporting date will not be possible for those students who take the assessment early in June. A July 1 date for the online results might be possible, with an extension of another week for results of paper assessments.

If this bill passes then the assessment administration window will need to be shortened to around May 19, so that the vendor can return the scores to schools, and schools can distribute the scores to families. The concern is that this would restrict schools from being able to test right up through the end of instruction.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction currently sends all assessment results to families at the end of the summer when all the results are back. Schools are able to send the individual student results to families as soon as the scores are returned, which date depends on when each individual student took the assessment.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony (Appropriations):

(In support) None.

(Opposed) The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction agrees that it is important to have assessment scores as soon as possible, but June 15 is too early for some schools that are still testing through early June. Districts would have to complete testing by May 15 in order to allow for the three weeks that are required for scoring and one week needed by districts to distribute the scores. For some districts this would necessitate an increased number of tablets in order to test more students in a shorter window. Online assessments

were first implemented last year. During that first year of implementation, many schools did receive their scores on-time, while others received them late due to unanticipated difficulties. Even with these difficulties, schools did receive nearly all of their scores by July 1. The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is opposed to June 15 because it would restrict districts who want to test through the end of their school year and would restrict their options for scheduling state testing.

Persons Testifying (Education): (In support) Representative Caldier, prime sponsor; Wendy Rader-Konofalski, Washington Education Association; and Barbara Zawlocki, Kathy Hamill, and Mary Hawksley, South Kitsap High School.

(Opposed) Robin Munson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Testifying (Appropriations): Robin Munson, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Education): None.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying (Appropriations): None.