
Education Committee

HB 2743

Brief Description: Concerning the issuance of a Washington state high school diploma.

Sponsors: Representatives Reykdal, McBride, Rossetti, Santos and Pollet.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires high school equivalency certificates issued by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent) to be issued as a Washington State high school diploma.
- Requires the Superintendent and the SBCTC to develop recommendations for modifying state and school district graduation rate data collection and tabulation requirements and processes to reflect high school equivalency certificates issued as Washington State high school diplomas.

Hearing Date: 1/26/16

Staff: Ashley Fisher (786-7296).

Background:

High School Diplomas.

A person may receive a high school diploma (diploma) by graduating from a public or private high school, or by completing a High School 21+ program offered at a Washington community or technical college.

To earn a diploma from a public high school, students must earn high school credit in a variety of subjects, pass state tests or approved state test alternatives, and complete a High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP). Districts and tribal schools may add additional requirements to the state requirements.

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.

Private schools must offer a curriculum in sufficient units to meet state graduation requirements. However, to receive a diploma, private school students do not need to take or meet standards on state assessments. Similarly, they are not required to complete a HSBP.

High School 21+ is a competency-based diploma available to adults aged 21 years and older. Students must demonstrate competency in reading, writing, and math in the context of science, history, government, occupational studies, and digital literacy. Students can demonstrate their knowledge in a variety of ways, including, a prior learning portfolio, high school and college transcripts, and work, life, and military experience.

High School Equivalency Certificate.

A high school equivalency certificate is a certificate issued jointly by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the Superintendent of Public Instruction (Superintendent). It indicates that the holder has attained standard scores at or above the minimum proficiency level on the high school equivalency test. In Washington, the General Education Development (GED) test is the high school equivalency test. The GED consists of four content areas: reasoning through language arts, mathematical reasoning, science, and social studies.

The State Board of Education adopts rules governing the eligibility of persons aged 16 to 18 to take a test and earn a high school equivalency certificate.

Summary of Bill:

High school equivalency certificates issued by the SBCTC and the Superintendent must be issued as Washington State high school diplomas. The diploma confers the same high school graduate status to the holder as a diploma issued to a student who satisfies high school graduation requirements.

The Superintendent, in collaboration with the SBCTC, is required to develop recommendations for modifying state and school district graduation rate data collection and tabulation requirements and processes to reflect high school equivalency certificates issued as Washington State high school diplomas. The recommendations must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate by December 31, 2016.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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