
Education Committee

HB 1012

Brief Description: Eliminating the use of the high school science assessment as a graduation prerequisite.

Sponsors: Representatives Taylor, Young, McCaslin, Harris, Manweller, Volz, Shea, J. Walsh, Stambaugh, Smith, Haler, Hargrove, Holy, Rodne, Short, Pike, Hayes, Bergquist, Schmick and Klippert.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Discontinues the requirement that students meet standard on the statewide high school science assessment in order to earn the Certificate of Academic Achievement that is required for graduation from a public high school.

Hearing Date: 1/19/17

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with the State Board of Education, is authorized to maintain and revise a statewide academic assessment system to measure student knowledge and skills on state learning standards and to use it 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 Every Student Achieves Act requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades 3-8 and one high school grade, as well as in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school in science.

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

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CAA, a student must meet state standards on required statewide assessments. Students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system, even with accommodations, may earn a CIA through a variety of ways to demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with their individual education programs.

Legislation adopted in 2004 required the graduating classes of 2010 onward to meet standard on a statewide high school science assessment to earn a CAA for purposes of high school graduation, but subsequent legislation, most recently in 2015, has thrice delayed this requirement. Legislation adopted in 2011 directed that high school science be assessed statewide using a Biology end-of-course (EOC) assessment. In accordance with specified legislative intent to transition to a comprehensive science assessment, assessments based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), standards which are being phased in currently, will begin in 2018.

However, for the graduating class of 2017, attaining a passing score on the Biology EOC assessment, or demonstrating proficiency through a statutorily authorized alternative assessment, is a graduation requirement. In accordance with the phasing-in of the NGSS assessment, future graduating classes, as a requirement for graduation, will need to attain a passing score on the NGSS assessment or demonstrate proficiency through an authorized alternative assessment.

The SBE is responsible for establishing the performance scores that students must meet on state assessments or statutorily authorized alternative assessments to obtain a CAA. The alternative assessments for the Biology EOC assessment include attaining an appropriate score on the applicable part of the SAT or ACT, an Advanced Placement examination, or an International Baccalaureate examination.

Summary of Bill:

The requirement that students meet standard on the statewide high school science assessment in order to earn the CAA that is required for graduation from a public high school is discontinued. The discontinuation of this requirement applies to the class of 2018 onward.

Various statutory references to alternative assessments for the statewide high school science assessment are eliminated, and references to the "Washington Assessment of Student Learning," a statewide assessment that was discontinued in 2009, are changed to "statewide student 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.