
Education Committee

HB 2621

Brief Description: Concerning certificates of academic and individual achievement.

Sponsors: Representatives Stonier, Harris, Dolan, MacEwen, Ortiz-Self, Wylie, Pollet, Goodman and Santos.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Decouples statewide high school assessments from graduation requirements by eliminating the requirement for students to earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) by meeting the state standard on assessments.
- Makes numerous changes related to the discontinuation of the CAA and the CIA, including eliminating alternative assessment options for students who have not met standard on statewide assessments.
- Modifies and preserves requirements obligating the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education to maintain and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science.
- Applies to the graduating class of 2014 and subsequent graduating classes.

Hearing Date: 1/15/18

Staff: Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

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 it for purposes of state and federal accountability. The state assessment system must cover the content areas of reading,

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writing, mathematics, and science for elementary, middle, and high school years. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 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 in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school in science.

In recent years, high school mathematics have been assessed in Washington using end-of-course tests (EOCs) in Algebra I and Geometry, and a tenth grade reading and writing assessment has also been utilized. In 2011 legislation directed that high school science be assessed using a Biology EOC. The Legislature subsequently expressed intent to transition from a Biology EOC to a comprehensive science assessment. Assessments based on the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), standards which are being phased in, are beginning in 2018.

In 2013 the SPI was directed to implement, beginning in the 2015 school year, student assessments developed with a multistate consortium in English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics. (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 tenth 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. The scores established by the SBE for graduation purposes may be different from those used by the SBE to identify career and college readiness.

High School Graduation Requirements.

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 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.

Since the graduating class of 2008, Washington students have been required to meet the state standards on the assessment in reading and mathematics to obtain a CAA and graduate from high school. 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 has repeatedly delayed this requirement.

Graduation requirements obligate students in the graduating class of 2018 to meet the standard on: the state assessments in ELA or the ELA SBAC; and at least one of the mathematics EOCs or the mathematics SBAC. 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. Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, the NGSS assessment will be used to demonstrate that students meet the state standard in science.

Below is a chart illustrating the assessments required for the graduating class of 2018 and beyond.

Graduating Class	English Language Arts	Mathematics	Science
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2018	10th Grade ELA Or 11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	Algebra I EOC Or Geometry EOC Or 11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Not Required
2019	11th Grade ELA (SBAC)	11th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Not Required
2020	10th Grade ELA (SBAC)	10th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Not Required
2021	10th Grade ELA (SBAC)	10th Grade Mathematics (SBAC)	Next Generation Science Standard Assessment

Alternative Assessment Options.

The Legislature has established numerous objective alternative assessment options for earning a CAA for students 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/International Baccalaureate exam; and
- beginning in the 2018-19 school year, earning a high enough score on an assessment approved by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for a locally determined course.

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

High School Completion Programs.

Legislation adopted in 2004 directed the OSPI and the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges to develop a program plan to provide a continuing education option for students who are eligible for the state's Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) and who need more time to develop language proficiency, but who are more age-appropriately suited for a postsecondary learning environment than a high school environment. In developing the plan, the SPI was directed to consider options to formally recognize the accomplishments of students in the TBIP who have completed the twelfth grade but have not earned a CAA.

Additionally, in accordance with a pilot program adopted by the Legislature in 2007, qualifying students were eligible to enroll in a high school completion project through courses or a program of study made available by a community or technical college participating in a high school completion program. In order to qualify for participation in the pilot program, the student must have completed all state and local high school graduation requirements except for earning a CAA or CIA, and must satisfy assessment-related and other requirements. The opportunity to meet all eligibility criteria for enrollment in the program expired August 1, 2015.

2017 Modifications to Graduation Requirements.

Legislation adopted in 2017 (chapter 31, Laws of 2017 3rd sp. sess., enacted as Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2224), made numerous changes to provisions governing and affecting graduation requirements. Among other changes, the legislation:

- delayed a requirement obligating students in the graduating class of 2017 onward to meet standard on a high school science assessment as a graduation prerequisite until the graduating class of 2021;
- established an expedited appeal process authorizing the SPI to waive requirements for CAAs and CIAs for qualifying students in the graduating classes of 2014 through 2018 who have not met standard on ELA assessments, mathematics assessments, or both;
- required, beginning in the 2017-18 school year for the graduating class of 2020, that the statewide high school assessments in ELA and mathematics be administered in the tenth grade;
- discontinued a collection of evidence objective alternative assessment;
- established new options for demonstrating student achievement of state standards, including completing dual credit courses and locally determined courses with qualifying assessments; and
- required school districts to provide students who have not earned a CAA before the beginning of the eleventh grade the opportunity to access interventions and academic supports, courses, or both to enable the students to meet minimum high school graduation standards;

Summary of Bill:

High School Graduation Requirements: Elimination of CAA, CIA, and Alternative Assessment Options.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2014, requirements for graduating from high school are decoupled from statewide high school assessments by discontinuing the CAA, the earning of which is currently required as proof that a student has successfully met standard on statewide assessments required for graduation.

The SPI and the SBE remain obligated to maintain and continue to develop and revise a statewide assessment system for students in the content areas of reading, writing, mathematics, and science, but numerous provisions related to assessments and the earning of a CAA are modified or deleted. For example:

- all alternative assessment options for earning a CAA are discontinued;
- a temporary provision governing EOC assessments for high school mathematics is discontinued; and
- provisions referencing CAAs (or CIAs) that govern International Baccalaureate diplomas, the Running Start Program, high school transcripts, home-based instruction, and private schools are modified to reflect the elimination of the CAA and the CIA.

The CIA is also discontinued and no longer required for graduation for qualifying students. Students requiring special education who are not appropriately assessed by the state assessment system, even with accommodations, may, through multiple options, demonstrate skills and abilities commensurate with their individual education programs.

High School Completion Programs.

Provisions governing the program for providing a continuing education option for older students who are eligible for the state's TBIP and who need more time to develop language proficiency, are modified. The plan for the program must consider options to formally recognize the accomplishments of students in the TBIP who have completed the twelfth grade but have not met all applicable graduation requirements.

A high school completion pilot program for qualifying students who have completed all state and local high school graduation requirements except for earning a CAA or CIA is eliminated. As noted previously, the opportunity to meet all eligibility criteria for enrollment in the program expired August 1, 2015.

Preservation of Certain Graduation-Related Provisions, Including Selected 2017 Modifications.

Existing requirements for student learning plans, provisions to be eliminated in the repeal of alternative assessment options, are generally preserved.

Additionally, 2017 requirements directing the administration of ELA and mathematics assessments to occur in tenth grade beginning with the class of 2020, district requirements to provide certain students with the opportunity to access interventions, academic supports, and courses to help students graduate, and the content basis for the science assessment, are preserved and relocated from provisions otherwise slated for repeal.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2018.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.