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## Education Committee

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### SSB 6132

**Brief Description:** Modifying provisions on second grade reading assessments.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Wellman, Zeiger, Chase and Hasegawa; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction).

#### Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requires school districts to select a second grade oral reading assessment which must be administered to students each fall and establishes associated requirements for districts.
- Repeals provisions obligating the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures that can be used to measure second grade reading accuracy and fluency skills.
- Repeals a requirement obligating the SPI to develop per-pupil costs related to the second grade reading assessment, and instead allows the SPI to provide an estimated per-pupil cost.
- Modifies funding provisions related to the assessment by indicating that if funds are appropriated, the SPI must provide districts with funds to purchase assessment materials and professional learning for educators about the district's newly adopted reading system for the second grade, rather than paying for the costs of the assessment.

**Hearing Date:** 2/20/18

**Staff:** Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

**Background:**

Statewide Student Assessment System - Grades Three through 12.

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*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.*

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), 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 (ESSA) requires states to assess students based on state learning standards in reading and mathematics in each of grades three through eight and in one high school grade, as well as in science in at least one grade in elementary, middle, and high school.

### Second Grade Reading Assessment.

In addition to assessments administered in grades three and higher, a reading assessment is administered by school districts each fall to students in the second grade. The administration of the assessments, which began with voluntarily participating schools and a pilot project, began statewide in the 1998-99 school year.

The purpose of the assessment is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of acquisition of oral reading accuracy and fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade. Statute directs the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures that can be used to measure second grade oral reading accuracy and fluency skills. In administering the assessment, districts must use an assessment selected from the collection adopted by the SPI.

The assessment procedures and reading passages in the collection must meet specified requirements, including:

- providing a reliable and valid measure of a student's oral reading accuracy and fluency skills; and
- assessing student skills in recognition of letter sounds, phonemic awareness, word recognition, and reading connected text. Text used for the test of fluency must be ordered in relation to difficulty.

Students who score substantially below grade level during the fall assessment are assessed at least one more time during the second grade. Assessment performance deemed to be "substantially below grade level" is to be determined for each passage in the collection by the SPI. Additionally, if a student, while taking the assessment, reaches a point at which the student's performance will be considered "substantially below grade level" regardless of the student's performance on the remainder of the assessment, the assessment may be discontinued.

Schools must have the assessment results available by the fall parent-teacher conference and must satisfy related parental notice and information requirements, including providing parents with strategies to help the parents improve their child's score.

The SPI has financial duties related to the assessments. The SPI is required to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments in the collection of reading passages that details the costs for administering the assessments, booklets, scoring, and training that is required to reliably administer the test. To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI must pay for the cost of administering and scoring the assessments, booklets or other assessment material, and training required to administer the test.

**Summary of Bill:**

Provisions directing the SPI to identify a collection of reading passages and assessment procedures for use by districts in measuring second grade reading skills are repealed. Related provisions requiring school districts to select a second grade reading assessment from the collection adopted by the SPI are also repealed.

School districts are instead directed to select a second grade oral reading assessment that must be annually administered each fall. If a student scores substantially below grade level according to the publisher's guidelines the student must be assessed at least one more time during the second grade.

Provisions establishing the purpose of the assessment are modified to specify that the purpose of the second grade "oral reading assessment," rather than "reading assessment," is to provide information to parents, teachers, and school administrators on the level of acquisition of oral reading accuracy, comprehension, and fluency skills of each student at the beginning of second grade. Additional references to "comprehension" are added to procedural requirements governing the administration of the assessment.

The assessment related financial duties of the SPI are modified. Rather than being directed to develop a per-pupil cost for the assessments, the SPI is authorized to provide an estimated per-pupil cost for second grade oral reading assessments aligned to Washington learning standards.

To the extent funds are appropriated, the SPI, rather than paying for the assessment costs, must instead provide districts with funds to purchase assessment materials and professional learning for educators about the district's reading assessment system for the second grade.

Provisions establishing and governing a 1997 pilot project in which the SPI was directed to identify which second grade reading assessments would be included in a final collection of assessments are repealed. All provisions related to student performance that is "substantially below grade level" are also repealed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 15, 2018.

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