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## Education Committee

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### HB 1599

**Brief Description:** Promoting career and college readiness through modified high school graduation requirements.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Stonier, Harris, Dolan, Ortiz-Self, MacEwen, Kilduff, Young, Valdez, Wylie, Volz, Bergquist, Stanford, Tharinger, Lekanoff, Pollet, Slatter and Ormsby.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Effective with the graduating class of 2020, decouples graduation requirements from statewide high school assessments by discontinuing the Certificate of Academic Achievement and the Certificate of Individual Achievement.
- Extends an appeals process that allows the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to waive certain graduation requirements for qualifying students in the graduating class of 2019 rather than only for students in the graduating classes of 2014 through 2018.
- Requires graduating students in the class of 2020 and subsequent classes to demonstrate career and college readiness through one of 11 pathway options.
- Requires school districts, beginning with the graduating class of 2021, to make six optional assessments available to students for the purpose of demonstrating career and college readiness.
- Directs the SPI, in collaboration with the State Board of Education, to examine and report upon options for replacing the statewide high school English language arts and comprehensive mathematics assessments with other assessments that will satisfy federal accountability requirements.

**Hearing Date:** 2/12/19

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

**Background:**

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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.*

### Graduation Requirements—Overview.

To qualify for graduation from a public high school in Washington, students must satisfy minimum course credit requirements, meet standards on required statewide assessments or approved alternatives, complete a high school and beyond plan, and satisfy any graduation requirements adopted by the local school district.

### Credits Required for Graduation, Waivers and Pre-High School Credit.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2019, students must complete 24 credits in specified subject areas as determined by the State Board of Education (SBE). The SBE adopts rules to implement the 24-credit graduation requirement, and those rules must include authorizations for school districts to waive up to two credits for individual students based on unusual circumstances. The waivers of districts must be issued in accordance with written policies adopted by the applicable school district board of directors.

If requested by the student and his or her family, a student who completed high school courses before attending high school must be given high school credit that is applied to fulfilling graduation requirements. To qualify for this credit, the academic level of the course must exceed the requirements for grades 7 and 8, and other specified criteria must be met.

### Statewide Student Assessment System.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI), in consultation with the 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, 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 3 through 8 and one high school grade. The ESSA also requires states to assess students in science at least once in each of three grade spans: grades 3 through 5; grades 6 through 9; and grades 10 through 12.

Students must earn a Certificate of Academic Achievement (CAA) or a Certificate of Individual Achievement (CIA) to qualify for graduation from a public high school. To obtain a CAA, a student must meet state standard on required statewide assessments administered in grade 10. 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.

Students in the graduating class of 2019 and in subsequent classes must meet the state standard on the English Language Arts (ELA) SBAC and mathematics assessments. (Washington is part of the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, known as the SBAC, a multistate consortium that developed student assessment in ELA and mathematics.) Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, graduating students must also meet the science standard on the Next Generation Science Standards assessment.

The SBE is responsible for establishing the performance scores that students must meet on state assessments. The scores established for purposes of graduation may be different from the scores used for the purpose of determining career and college readiness.

### Objective Alternative Assessment Options.

If a student does not meet standard on an assessment required for graduation, he or she may utilize one or more objective alternative assessment options (alternative assessments) if the student has taken the applicable standard assessment or assessments at least once. The alternative assessments must be comparable in rigor to the skills and knowledge that the student must demonstrate on statewide student assessments, and must be objective in their determination of student achievement of state standards. If a student meets the state standard on the alternative assessment, he or she earns a CAA. The alternative assessments include:

- grade comparison, provided the student has a sufficient grade point average;
- earning a high enough score on the SAT or ACT;
- earning a high enough score on an Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate exam;
- earning college credit by completing a dual credit course in ELA or mathematics; and
- taking and passing a locally-determined course and associated assessment.

### Limited Waiver Options for Certificates of Academic and Individual Achievement.

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 established an expedited appeals process authorizing the SPI, following local approval, to waive requirements for the CAAs and the CIAs for qualifying students in the graduating classes of 2014 through 2018 who have not met standard on ELA assessments, mathematics assessments, or both.

School districts may also waive 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 and Beyond Plans.

Students qualifying for graduation must complete a high school and beyond plan (HSBP). The purpose of the HSBP is to guide the student's high school experience and to prepare the student for postsecondary education and career opportunities. The HSBP must be initiated for each student during grade 7 or 8 and must include specific elements established in statute, including the identification of career and education goals, information about dual credit programs, and a four-year plan for high school courses. The HSBP must be updated to reflect student results on statewide assessments and revised as necessary for changing interests, goals, and needs.

### **Summary of Bill:**

#### High School Graduation Requirements—Decoupling from Assessments.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2020, 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 CIA is simultaneously discontinued after the graduating class of 2019 and ceases to be a graduation requirement for qualifying students.

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 scheduled for repeal in 2021. For example:

- all alternative assessment options for earning a CAA are discontinued;
- a temporary provision governing end-of-course 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, and private schools are modified to reflect the elimination of the CAA and the CIA.

#### Graduation Requirements and Selected Credit Waivers.

Requirements directing rules of the SBE to include authorizations that allow school districts to waive up to two credits for individual students are modified to specify that the waiver must be based on the student's circumstances, rather than unusual circumstances, and none of the waived credits may be credits that are identified as mandatory credits by the SBE. Additionally, school districts issuing the waivers must adhere to written school district policies adopted by the applicable school district board of directors.

#### Limited Waiver Options for Students in the Graduating Class of 2019.

The expedited appeals process that allows the SPI, following approval by the local school district, to waive requirements for the CAAs and the CIAs for qualifying students is extended by one-year to apply to eligible students in the graduating class of 2019. The waiver is also extended to students who have not met standard on the statewide high school science assessment, rather than only those who have not met standard on the ELA assessment, the mathematics assessment, or both.

#### Application of Pre-High School Credit to High School Requirements.

Opt-in provisions for earning pre-high school credit are changed to opt-out provisions. Unless requested otherwise by the student and the student's family, a student who completed high school courses before attending high school must be given high school credit that applies to high school graduation requirements.

#### High School and Beyond Plans.

Numerous modifications are made to provisions governing HSBPs. The stated purpose of the HSPB is revised to specify that it is intended to guide the student's high school experience and inform course taking that is aligned with the student's goals for education or training and career after high school. Also, each student's HSBP must be updated to inform junior year course taking.

Other changes provide that if a student has an individualized education program (IEP), the written plan that guides the delivery of special education services, the HSBP must be developed in alignment with their IEP. For students with IEPs, their HSBP must be updated in alignment with their school to postschool transition plan.

The four-year plan for high school course taking that is part of a student's HSBP must identify a course sequence to inform academic acceleration that meets specified requirements.

Additionally, each student's HSBP must include evidence that the student has received specific information about federal and state financial aid programs that provide financial assistance for postsecondary education programs.

Graduation Pathways for the Graduating Class of 2020 and Subsequent Classes.

Beginning with the class of 2020, the pathway to graduation and a meaningful high school diploma must include:

- demonstration of career and college readiness through successful completion of the HSBP;
- the earning of required credits;
- and successfully completing one or more of 11 graduation pathway options.

Examples of the graduation pathways, which must be approved by the OSPI, include:

- earning high school credit in a high school transition course;
- earning college credit by completing a dual credit course in ELA or mathematics;
- earning high school credit in a career and technical education sequence of courses or program of study;
- earning high school credit through an apprenticeship preparation program;
- meeting or exceeding standard on the high school assessment in ELA or mathematics;
- meeting or exceeding scores necessary to earn college credit on Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or Cambridge international exams in ELA or mathematics;
- passing the armed services vocational aptitude battery; and
- passing an industry-based credential exam.

For the graduating classes of 2020 and 2021, students may also demonstrate career and college readiness through a postsecondary placement pathway that includes acceptance into an institution of higher education, employment in an occupation identified in the student's HSPB, or other unspecified options.

Optional Assessments for Demonstrating College and Career Readiness.

With limited exceptions, beginning with the graduating class of 2021, school districts must make the following six assessments available to students in grade 10:

- the SAT test;
- the ACT test;
- a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) literacy and high technology assessment developed through a specific advisory board and rule adoption-based process;
- a trade skills aptitude assessment developed through a specific advisory board and rule adoption-based process;
- the armed forces qualification test of the armed services vocational aptitude battery; and
- an assessment developed by the school district that has been approved for use by the SPI.

The requirement to make the STEM literacy and high technology assessment, or the trade skills aptitudes assessment, available to students does not apply if the assessment has not been approved for use by the SPI.

Beginning with the graduating class of 2021, students may complete one or more of the offered optional assessments to demonstrate career and college readiness, and school districts must provide students with an opportunity to retake an offered assessment at least annually.

Assessment scores earned by students may not be used, in whole or part, to determine whether a student is eligible to graduate from high school.

If a student elects to complete only one of the offered assessments, that assessment must align with personalized pathway requirements or a specific post high school career or educational outcome identified by the student in his or her HSBP. If a student elects to complete two or more of the offered assessments, at least one of the assessments must align with personalized pathway requirements or a specific post high school career or educational outcome identified in the student's HSBP.

The offered optional assessments must be administered at no cost to the student. However, students who have completed an assessment but who wish to improve their results may be responsible for the costs of retaking the assessment.

School districts must establish and publicize goals for the percentage of students that meet standard on the optional assessments. School districts must also collect and annually submit to the SPI and the SBE the number and percentage of graduating students that met standard on one of the assessments. Data collected and submitted in accordance with this requirement, and any resulting reports or reporting, must comply with established disaggregation requirements.

#### Examination of Options for Replacing Current Statewide High School Assessments.

The SPI, in collaboration with the SBE and in consultation with persons and entities with appropriate expertise, must examine and report upon options for replacing the high school ELA and comprehensive mathematics assessments developed with the multistate consortium with other assessments that will satisfy the federal accountability requirements of the ESSA. The resulting report must be submitted to the governor and the education committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate by November 15, 2020. A preliminary report is due to the same recipients by January 1, 2020.

#### Continued Application of Preexisting Graduation Requirements to Class of 2019 and Prior Classes.

Specific provisions related to statewide assessments, assessments for special education students, and the earning of the CAA or the CIA that existed on January 1, 2019, continue to apply to students in the graduating class of 2019 and prior graduating classes.

#### Modifications to Statewide High School Science Assessment.

Requirements for the statewide high school assessment in science are modified to remove and obsolete reference to an end-of-course biology assessment, and to specify that the assessment must be a comprehensive assessment that measures the state standards for the application of science and engineering practices, disciplinary core ideas, and crosscutting concepts in the domains of physical sciences, life sciences, Earth and spaces sciences, and engineering design.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 11, 2019.

**Effective Date:** This bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed, except for section 101 (relating to the extending the expedited appeals process of the SPI) and section 102 (relating to the HSPBs, credit waivers for individual circumstances, and pre-high school credits), which take effect immediately.