



This Bill Analysis reflects the contents of the bill as it was presented in committee.

HOUSE BILL 559: Testing Feedback for Students/Teachers

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:	House Education - K-12	Date:	April 21, 2015
Introduced by:	Reps. Whitmire, Lucas, Riddell, Elmore	Prepared by:	James Ritter
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H559-CSTW-10		Legislative Analyst

SUMMARY: House Bill 559 directs the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Department of Public Instruction to provide summative feedback to parents, students, and teachers on the results of statewide tests and assessments.

The Proposed Committee Substitute (PCS) for House Bill 559 would also (i) increase the number of days before the end of the semester annual assessments or finals must be administered from five to ten (semester long courses), and ten to fifteen (year-long courses); (ii) clarify that student performance data is to be provided to local administrative units (LEAs), teachers, parents and students within the final five days of a student taking a test or assessment; and (iii) remove language referring to the dissemination of information regarding individual test items.

CURRENT LAW: G.S. 115C-174.12 requires the State Board of Education to establish policies and guidelines necessary to minimize the time students spend taking tests administered through the State and local testing programs to minimize the testing frequency and field testing at any one school. The policies and guidelines include:

- Schools may not devote more than two days of instructional time per year to taking practice tests that do not have the primary purpose of assessing current student learning.
- Students in a school may not take field or national tests during the two weeks before end-of-grade tests, end-of-course tests, or a regularly scheduled final exam.
- Schools may not participate in more than two field tests at any one grade level during a school year.
- All annual assessments of student achievement and all final exams for courses must be administered within the final ten instructional days of the school years for year-long courses and within the final five instructional days of the semester for semester long courses. Exceptions are permitted to accommodate students with individualized education programs (IEPs) and section 504 plans and for administrations of final exams for courses with national or international curricula required to be held at designated times.

The policies adopted by the SBE are to reflect standard testing practices that insure the reliability and validity of those taking the tests. The results of the final tests are to be used in the final design of each test. The SBE's policies regarding the testing of students with disabilities shall:

- Provide accommodations and alternate assessments methods consistent with the student's IEP and section 504 plans.
- Prohibit statewide tests as the only determination of decisions about a student's graduation or promotion.

O. Walker Reagan
Director



Research Division
(919) 733-2578

* H 5 5 9 - S M T W - 1 8 C S T W - 1 0 - V 6 *

House Bill 559

Page 2

- Provide parents with information about the statewide testing program and options for students with disabilities.

The SBE shall report all proposed policies and changes in policy to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee before adoption and may appoint an advisory council on testing to carry out its responsibilities. The Superintendent of Public Instruction is responsible for statewide administration of the testing program and shall notify local boards of education by October 1 of each year of any field tests to be administered during the school year, the schools where the tests will be administered, and specific field tests that will be administered at each school.

Local board of education are to cooperate with the SBE in implementing these responsibilities, including the regulations and policies established by the SBE. They are encouraged to use annual tests continue to develop local testing programs designed to diagnose student needs.

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS for House Bill 559 would increase the number of days before the end of the semester or year in which annual assessments or final exams must be administered from five to ten for semester long courses, and from ten to fifteen for year-long courses.

The PCS would require the SBE to provide student performance data on annual assessments or final exams to local school administrative units, teachers, parents, and students. The data would be disseminated within five days of students taking the tests or assessments, if practicable, or within a reasonable amount of time to protect the integrity of statewide tests. For a student, the student's parent, and the teacher of record the following student performance data would include:

- The standard to which a test item is linked.
- Indication of whether the student's response to a test item was correct or incorrect.

A teacher of record would receive the percentage and number of students who responded correctly on a test item and the corresponding standard to assist the teacher with identifying specific areas in need of improvement and to adjust lesson plans and instruction.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The act is effective when it becomes law and applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

BACKGROUND: The North Carolina End-of-Grade test (grades 3-8) and End-of-Course test (for middle and high school students) are used to sample a student's knowledge of subject-related concepts as specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and to provide a global estimate of the student's mastery of the material in a particular content area.