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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sHB 7011**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENT STATE-WIDE ASSESSMENTS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

Starting with the 2026-27 school year, this bill reduces the frequency with which public school students must take standardized assessments (“mastery exams”) in certain subjects.

Under current law, students in grades three through eight must annually take a mastery exam in reading, writing, and math. This testing schedule conforms with federal law governing Title I funding (see BACKGROUND). Starting with the 2026-27 school year, the bill instead requires students to take this exam in grades four, six, and eight.

By law, unchanged by the bill, students must also take a (1) mastery exam in science in grades 5, 8, and 11 and (2) college readiness exam in grade 11.

The bill also requires local and regional boards of education, by October 1, to notify parents and guardians about their child’s score on a mastery exam taken the previous school year. By law, the State Department of Education must give the boards the mastery exam scores by August 15 of each school year following the exam administration.

Lastly, the bill makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2025

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Mastery Exams***

By law, the State Board of Education (SBE) must select and approve mastery exams that measure essential and grade-appropriate skills in the required subjects.

In practice, SBE has approved (1) the Smarter Balanced Assessment, or SBAC, for reading, writing, and math; (2) Next Generation Science Standards for science; and (3) the SAT for the required college readiness exam.

***Federal Law on Standardized Assessments***

As a condition of receiving Title I education funds, federal law requires states to submit a plan that meets numerous requirements, including implementing high-quality academic assessments in mathematics, reading or language arts, and science. It specifically requires assessments in (1) math and reading or language arts to be given in grades three through eight and at least once in grades 9 through 12 and (2) science to be given at least once in each of grades three through five, grades six through nine, and grades 10 through 12 (20 U.S.C. § 6311(b)(2)). Federal law grants the U.S. Department of Education secretary broad authority to waive federal statutory and regulatory requirements upon request by a state or local education agency, including the standardized testing requirements (20 U.S.C. § 7861).

Title I is the largest federal K-12 grant program, and it provides supplemental funding to schools to improve learning outcomes for underserved students.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 39      Nay 5      (03/28/2025)