

HCS HB 1851 -- STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SPONSOR: Brown (87)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 13 to 1. Voted "To Return to Committee of Origin" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Administrative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1851.

This bill modifies language relating to the Statewide Assessment System by requiring that the State Board of Education (SBE) make the system student-centered and use assessments across the school year that support teaching, learning, and program improvement, so that a summative profile is developed of the student's learning.

The bill replaces current language with an updated specified list describing what the assessment system should be comprised of, including but not limited to: aligning to state standards; accessing to national norms, measuring growth during and across years; and shall only be used for the purpose of compliance with federal law.

The bill additionally repeals existing language relating to exemplary levels and the "Outstanding School Waivers", and requires the SBE to identify and recognize a minimum of two national school accreditation agencies and allows for districts that have an accreditation from either of the national agencies to be considered fully accredited for state purposes.

Beginning with the 2026-27 school year, schools must create ways to measure student learning that are meaningful and relate to students' real-life experiences. These measures can include things like portfolios, assessments based on performance, and projects with public demonstrations.

The local measures should:

- (1) Be authentic to what students are learning;
- (2) Keep students engaged;
- (3) Provide feedback to students;
- (4) Involve a variety of partners in the development; and
- (5) Be available for the community to see.

These assessments and systems should be developed with the input of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the community to give a complete picture of student learning and meet statewide academic standards.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) may offer feedback and support by creating model units with embedded assessments or identifying high-quality curricula. The results of these assessments may be added to the school report card, along with any comments from the Department's review.

The bill modifies the school accountability report card requirements and allows local assessment results and local quality indicators to be included. This bill further modifies the reporting elements to include among other data points student growth, charter school tax rate and operating budget, and criteria relating to the federal accountability system.

The bill defines "Grade-level equivalence", a metric developed and used by DESE to show a student's proximity to doing grade-level work, and requires DESE to establish panels to review and revise the performance-level descriptors for each academic subject and grade level. The bill identifies and describes the performance level descriptors as: advanced; proficient, grade level, basic, and below basic with specified characteristics for each level.

Beginning in the 2025-26 school year and in each subsequent year the school accountability report card must provide each student's grade-level equivalence as measured on the statewide assessment. Data relating to the grade-level equivalence must be searchable on a building-by-building, school-by-school, district-by-district, and statewide level. Such data must display a percentage of students at grade level or above for each level, provided that no data will disclose personal identification of any student except to a student's parent.

The bill requires the SBE to identify and recognize by July 1, 2025, a minimum of two national school accreditation agencies and beginning in the 2027-28 school year allow for districts that have an accreditation from either of the national agencies to be considered fully accredited for state purposes.

The bill modifies provisions of the School Turnaround Program to reflect updates to the State Accountability System and to provide comprehensive support and improvement schools or targeted support and improvement schools with assistance.

The bill repeals Section 162.084, RSMo relating to required mailings and reporting for districts or charter schools that are in the bottom 5% on the annual performance report.

This bill includes HB 1756 (2024).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

**PROPONENTS:** Supporters say that this bill provides a sense of structure to accreditation and that is important to have tied to accountability however having it tied to assessments missed the point of assessments which are to drive instruction. Having national accreditation standards allows a better comparison between districts and allows districts to stop teaching to a test that isn't as valuable because it is not a locally controlled product and has too much DESE influence.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Brown; Armorvine; Missouri NEA; Coop School Districts of Greater of Kansas City; Dava-Leigh Brush, Missouri Equity Ed Partnership Action; and Missouri Council Of School Administrators.

**OPPONENTS:** There was not opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.