



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 639**

January Session, 2015

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1095

*Senate, April 14, 2015*

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS ASSESSMENTS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) The Department of Education shall  
2 conduct a study of the administration of the state-wide mastery  
3 examination, pursuant to section 10-14n of the general statutes, as  
4 amended by this act. The department shall study (1) the effect and  
5 impact of the state-wide mastery examination on student learning  
6 time, (2) the extent to which the state-wide mastery examination is  
7 aligned with curriculum standards adopted by the State Board of  
8 Education, (3) the requirements of federal law regarding state-wide  
9 testing, (4) the effect and impact of the administration of the state-wide  
10 mastery examination on students in grade eleven, and (5) the  
11 feasibility of the administration of state-approved progress monitoring  
12 tests throughout the school year and whether such progress  
13 monitoring tests are in compliance with the terms of the federal waiver  
14 to the No Child Left Behind Act, P.L. 107-110, granted to the state. Not  
15 later than January 1, 2016, the department shall submit such study to

16 the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
17 cognizance of matters relating to education, in accordance with the  
18 provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes.

19 Sec. 2. Section 10-14n of the general statutes is repealed and the  
20 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

21 (a) As used in this section, "mastery examination" means (1) for  
22 students enrolled in grades three to eight, inclusive, an examination or  
23 examinations, approved by the State Board of Education, that measure  
24 essential and grade-appropriate skills in reading, writing, mathematics  
25 or science, and (2) for students enrolled in grade eleven, an  
26 examination or examinations, including any nationally recognized  
27 examination, approved by the State Board of Education, that measure  
28 essential and grade-appropriate skills in reading, writing, mathematics  
29 or science.

30 (b) (1) For the school year commencing July 1, [2013] 2015, and each  
31 school year thereafter, each student enrolled in grades three to eight,  
32 inclusive, and grade [ten or] eleven in any public school shall,  
33 annually, take a mastery examination in reading, writing and  
34 mathematics.

35 (2) For the school year commencing July 1, 2013, and each school  
36 year thereafter, each student enrolled in grade five, eight [, ten] or  
37 eleven in any public school shall, annually, in March or April, take a  
38 state-wide mastery examination in science.

39 (c) Mastery examinations pursuant to subsection (b) of this section  
40 shall be provided by and administered under the supervision of the  
41 State Board of Education or approved by the State Board of Education.

42 (d) The scores on each component of the mastery examination for  
43 each [tenth or] eleventh grade student may be included on the  
44 permanent record and transcript of each such student who takes such  
45 examination. For each [tenth or] eleventh grade student who meets or  
46 exceeds the state-wide mastery goal level on any component of the

47 mastery examination, a certification of having met or exceeded such  
 48 goal level shall be made on the permanent record and the transcript of  
 49 each such student and such student shall be issued a certificate of  
 50 mastery for such component. Each [tenth or] eleventh grade student  
 51 who fails to meet the mastery goal level on each component of said  
 52 mastery examination may annually take or retake each such  
 53 component at its regular administration until such student scores at or  
 54 above each such state-wide mastery goal level or such student  
 55 graduates or reaches age twenty-one.

56 (e) No public school may require achievement of a satisfactory score  
 57 on a mastery examination, or any subsequent retest on a component of  
 58 such examination as the sole criterion of promotion or graduation.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-14n

**ED**            *Joint Favorable Subst.*

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The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

The bill requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to (1) study the administration of the statewide mastery examinations and (2) submit the results to the Education Committee by January 1, 2016. This is not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact as SDE has the staff and expertise available to complete the study.

The bill makes various other procedural changes to mastery exams, which are not anticipated to result in a fiscal impact.

**The Out Years**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:** None

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 1095*****AN ACT CONCERNING STUDENTS ASSESSMENTS.*****SUMMARY:**

By law, public school students in certain grades must take mastery exams that are designed to measure grade-appropriate skills in reading, writing, math, and science. Currently, high school students must take the exams in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade. By eliminating the 10<sup>th</sup> grade option, the bill requires that students take the exam in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (P.L. 107-110) allows the high school exams to be given sometime in grades 10 through 12.

Also by law, the State Board of Education (SBE) must approve the exams, and the bill specifies they may be a nationally-recognized exam. Under an existing test administration provision, SBE must provide and administer the tests. The bill specifies that SBE either provide and administer or approve the tests. (It is unclear what this provision means, since by definition, mastery tests are approved by SBE.)

The changes are effective for the school year starting July 1, 2015.

The bill also requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to (1) study the administration of the statewide mastery examinations and (2) submit the results to the Education Committee by January 1, 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015, but the statewide mastery exam study provision is effective upon passage.

**MASTERY EXAM STUDY**

Under the bill, the study must include the:

1. effect and impact of the statewide mastery examinations on student learning time;
2. extent to which the mastery examinations are aligned with SBE-adopted curriculum standards (e.g., the Common Core State Standards, adopted in 2010);
3. requirements of federal law regarding statewide testing;
4. effect and impact of the administration of the statewide mastery examination on 11<sup>th</sup> grade students; and
5. feasibility of administering state-approved progress monitoring tests throughout the school year and whether such tests comply with the state's waiver of the federal NCLB (see BACKGROUND).

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***NCLB Waiver***

In 2012, Connecticut applied for and was granted, as were many other states, a waiver of certain aspects of NCLB (e.g., federal sanctions when a state's students do not improve academic performance at the pace required under NCLB). In order to receive the waiver the state had to agree to take a number of steps including specifying how it would (1) intervene in low performing schools and school districts, (2) tie teacher evaluation to student achievement, and (3) establish college and career ready standards for students. Connecticut is currently in the process of applying for a three-year waiver extension.

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 29 Nay 4 (03/27/2015)