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## Higher Education Committee

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### HB 1743

**Brief Description:** Concerning the acceptance of additional high school equivalency tests.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Lytton, Pollet, Sells, Stanford, Kagi, Reykdal and Tarleton.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to identify high school equivalency test options with certain characteristics.
- Requires the SBCTC to communicate the menu of accepted test options to public and private administrators of the tests.

**Hearing Date:** 2/10/15

**Staff:** Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

#### Background:

##### High School Equivalency Certificate.

A High School Equivalency Certificate is a certificate issued jointly by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction that indicates that the individual has passed the High School Equivalency (HSE) test. Each year more than 15,000 state residents earn their HSE Certificate.

##### High School Equivalency Test.

The SBCTC is authorized to adopt rules governing the HSE test, subject to any rules adopted by the State Board of Education. In 2013 the SBCTC was required to identify and accept a HSE test that includes testing in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Washington's HSE test is the nationally administered GED test. In 2014 the GED was updated to test the "skills and knowledge to succeed in the 21st century marketplace." The new GED test is provided on a computer at an approved testing center. The passing score is 150, on a scale of

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100 to 200, for each of the four subjects. Test takers may earn "honors" if they score 170 or higher on any subject. The GED test costs \$30 per subject, with a discount for retakes.

**Summary of Bill:**

The SBCTC must identify HSE test options with the following characteristics:

- at least one option that is low cost to the student;
- at least one option that does not require computer proficiency; and
- at least one option that is appropriate for students who have been in the workforce, need a high school diploma for employment reasons, have been incarcerated or in the military, have been removed from any academic environment for four years or more, or are not planning to pursue a college education.

The SBCTC must communicate the menu of accepted test options to public and private administrators of the tests.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on February 3, 2015.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.