

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	10 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Dembrow, Harker, Huffman, Komp, Maurer, Roblan, Sprenger, Thatcher, VanOrman, Gelser
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Kevin T. Christiansen, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/17, 4/27

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires school districts (districts) and public charter schools (charter schools) to award modified diplomas only to students with an inability to meet a full set of academic content standards for a high school diploma with reasonable modification and accommodation. Establishes eligibility requirements for modified diploma including: 1) satisfying requirements established by the State Board of Education (board); 2) completing at least 12 credits from grade 9 through completion of high school; and 3) having a documented history of an inability to maintain grade level achievement due to significant learning barriers or having a medical condition that creates a barrier to achievement. Requires districts or charter schools to award extended diplomas only to students with an inability to meet academic content standards for a high school diploma or a modified diploma with reasonable modifications and accommodations. Establishes eligibility requirements for extended diploma including: 1) satisfying requirements of extended diploma established by the board; and 2) participation in alternate assessments in at least two assessment areas beginning in the sixth grade or having a serious injury or illness that occurs after grade eight that impacts the student's ability to participate in grade level activities. Requires districts or charter schools to: 1) ensure students have access to resources to achieve a high school diploma, modified diploma, extended diploma or alternative certificate; 2) provide literacy instruction to all students until graduation; and 3) beginning in grade five, annually providing information to parents of a student taking an alternative assessment of availability of a modified diploma, extended diploma and alternative certificate. Requires districts and charter schools to make extended diplomas available during the 2009-2010 school year. Requires changes to modified diplomas first apply to students July 1, 2012. Prohibits denial of special education services for those 21 years of age or younger who received a high school diploma, modified diploma, extended diploma or alternative certificate. Declares an emergency; effective July 1, 2009.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Need for multiple forms of diplomas
- Creation of diploma standards for students with significant learning challenges
- Providing access to academic opportunities for those with disabilities

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Prohibits board from adopting rules denying persons 21 years of age or younger from access to special education services if person received a high school diploma, modified diploma, extended diploma or alternative certificate.

BACKGROUND: House Bill 2507A requires school districts and public charter schools to award modified diplomas, extended diplomas or alternative certificates to students with learning challenges. The measure establishes standards for each and builds upon the modified diploma enacted in House Bill 2848 (2007). House Bill 2507A also provides that a person 21 years of age or younger will not be denied access to special education transition services under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) if the person received a high school diploma, modified diploma, extended diploma or alternative certificate.

4/29/2009 12:03:00 PM

This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.