

Enrolled
Senate Bill 744

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CHAPTER

AN ACT

Relating to high school diploma requirements; and declaring an emergency.

Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:

SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section, “high school diploma” means the high school diploma options offered in this state under ORS 329.451, including a high school diploma, a modified diploma, an extended diploma and an alternative certificate.

(2) The Department of Education shall:

(a) Review state requirements for high school diploma options offered in this state, as those requirements are prescribed by ORS 329.451 and by rules adopted by the State Board of Education.

(b) Review state requirements related to demonstrations of proficiency in skills or academic content areas that are not related to career and technical education, with an emphasis on demonstrations of proficiency in Essential Learning Skills.

(c) Make recommendations for state requirements for high school diplomas in this state to reduce disparities and to ensure that every student will be on track to earn one of the high school diplomas.

(3) The review conducted under this section must include:

(a) An evaluation of the use of alternative certificates and how the requirements for alternative certificates compare to the requirements for other high school diplomas;

(b) An evaluation of the role of a school district or a public charter school when a student who has the documented history described in ORS 329.451 (7)(b) or (8)(b) seeks to pursue a high school diploma with more stringent requirements than a modified diploma or an extended diploma, as provided by ORS 329.451 (1)(c);

(c) A comparison of high school diploma requirements in this state with high school diploma requirements in other states;

(d) The identification of the expectations of employers and post-secondary institutions of education related to the skills and knowledge of persons who earn high school diplomas in this state;

(e) The determination of whether the skills and knowledge expected to be attained by persons who earn high school diplomas in this state, as identified in paragraph (d) of this subsection, align with the requirements for high school diplomas in this state;

(f) The identification of the causes of disparities that have resulted from the requirements for high school diplomas in this state; and

(g) The determination of whether the requirements for high school diplomas in this state have been applied inequitably to different student populations.

(4) When conducting the review and developing recommendations under this section, the department shall:

(a) Use a transparent process that is equitable, accessible and inclusive;

(b) Enable and encourage meaningful engagement with:

(A) Representatives from historically underserved students, including students who:

(i) Have a disability;

(ii) Are from an immigrant or refugee population;

(iii) Are from racial or ethnic groups that have historically experienced academic disparities;

(iv) Are English language learners; or

(v) Are from a federally recognized Indian tribe of this state;

(B) Youth-led organizations that engage and empower youth; and

(C) Communities from across this state; and

(c) Develop recommendations for changes to the requirements for high school diplomas:

(A) Based on data and the engagement process described in paragraph (b) of this subsection; and

(B) With the goal of ensuring that the processes and outcomes related to the requirements for high school diplomas are equitable, accessible and inclusive.

(5)(a) Not later than September 1, 2022, the department shall provide a report to:

(A) The interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to education; and

(B) The State Board of Education.

(b) The report required under paragraph (a) of this subsection shall:

(A) Include a summary of the components of the review conducted as described in subsection (3) of this section, including information on the comments gathered during the engagement process described in subsection (4)(b) of this section.

(B) Recommend changes in legislation or administrative rules that will reduce disparities and ensure that every student will be on track to earn one of the high school diplomas offered in this state.

(C) Include an analysis of the effectiveness of requiring students to demonstrate proficiency in Essential Learning Skills and an explanation of the reasons the department concludes that requirements related to demonstrations of proficiency in Essential Learning Skills should be retained, modified or eliminated. If the department concludes that demonstrations of proficiency of Essential Learning Skills should be retained, the department shall provide recommendations for alternative methods for students to demonstrate proficiency in skills or academic content areas that are not related to career and technical education.

SECTION 2. Section 1 of this 2021 Act is repealed on June 30, 2023.

SECTION 3. Notwithstanding any rules adopted by the State Board of Education, a student may not be required to show proficiency in Essential Learning Skills as a condition of receiving a high school diploma during the 2021-2022, 2022-2023 or 2023-2024 school year.

SECTION 4. This 2021 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2021 Act takes effect on its passage.

Passed by Senate April 21, 2021

Repassed by Senate June 16, 2021

.....
Lori L. Brocker, Secretary of Senate

.....
Peter Courtney, President of Senate

Passed by House June 14, 2021

.....
Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Received by Governor:

.....M.,....., 2021

Approved:

.....M.,....., 2021

.....
Kate Brown, Governor

Filed in Office of Secretary of State:

.....M.,....., 2021

.....
Shemia Fagan, Secretary of State