

## HB 3068 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Education

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**Meeting Dates:** 3/8, 3/22

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Beginning in the 2024-2025 school year, requires school districts and public charter schools to award high school diploma to certain students who have passed an approved high school equivalency test.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Age of students who can take an equivalency test
- North Dakota's equivalency diploma
- Number of students in Oregon who are graduates, completers, and who have taken an equivalency test

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces the measure. Allows school districts and public charter schools to award a high school equivalency diploma to a student in grades 11 or 12 who has passed an approved high school equivalency test and is at least 16 years old, if the student's parent or guardian consents. Students over the age of 18 or who have been emancipated may provide their own consent.

#### BACKGROUND:

In 2004, the National Center for Education Statistics convened a task force to address how graduation rates should be calculated. Prior to this time, states had not only had their own distinct graduation requirements, but each state had made the graduation rate calculation according to its own standards. Because states used different formulas for making the calculation, rates were not comparable from state to state.

In 2005, all 50 U.S. governors and 12 national education organizations signed the National Governors Association *Graduation Counts Compact*. The *Compact* committed states to improving data collection, adopting a single graduation rate, and reporting progress on graduation and dropout rates.

In 2008, the U.S. Department of Education began requiring states to use a single formula to calculate the rate: the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate (four-year ACGR). ACGR tracks the progress of a group of ninth-grade students through high school and to graduation with a regular high school diploma. For the 2021-2022 school year, Oregon's four-year ACGR was 81.34 percent. As part of the calculation requirement, states may not count students who earn an equivalency credential as having graduated with a regular diploma. They are instead counted as "completers," and a state's completer rate is reported separately from its graduation rate.

This requirement was further codified in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), enacted by Congress in 2015. Section 8101(43) prohibits states from giving regular high school diplomas to individuals who have earned an equivalency:

*(43) REGULAR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA.—The term “regular high school diploma”—*

*(A) means the standard high school diploma awarded to the preponderance of students in the State that is fully aligned with State standards, or a higher diploma, except that a regular high school diploma shall not be aligned to the alternate academic achievement standards described in section 1111(b)(1)(E); and*

*(B) does not include a recognized equivalent of a diploma, such as a general equivalency diploma, certificate of completion, certificate of attendance, or similar lesser credential.*

House Bill 3068 gives a standard high school diploma to certain individuals who have passed an equivalency test.