

18A:7C-1 to 18A:7C-9

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY CHECKLIST

(Schools--High school graduation standards)

NJSA 18A:7C-1 to 18A:7C-9

LAWS 1979

CHAPTER 241

Bill No. S1154

Sponsor(s) Feldman and others

Date Introduced May 11, 1978

Committee: Assembly Education

Senate Education

Amended during passage

Yes

~~No~~

Amendments during passage denoted by asterisks

Date of Passage: Assembly

July 16, 1979

Senate

Sept. 18, 1978

Date of approval

Dec. 17, 1979

Following statements are attached if available:

Sponsor statement

Yes

~~No~~

Committee Statement: Assembly

Yes

~~No~~

Senate

Yes

~~No~~

Fiscal Note

~~Yes~~

No

Veto Message

~~Yes~~

No

Message on signing

Yes

No

Following were printed:

Reports

Yes

~~No~~

Hearings

Yes

~~No~~

974.90 N.J. Legislature. Senate.
E24 Education Committee.
1978k Public hearing on graduation standards (S1154), held 6-20-78.

974.90 N.J. Legislature. Assembly. Education Committee.
E24 Public hearing on graduation standards
1979k (S1154), held 2-28-79.

(over)

6/22/81

974.90
E24
1977/z/a

N.J. State Committee on High School Graduation Requirements.
Report. Trenton, 1977.

[SECOND OFFICIAL COPY REPRINT]

SENATE, No. 1154

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 11, 1978

By Senators FELDMAN, SCARDINO, FRIEDLAND, EWING,
PERSKIE and DODD

Referred to Committee on Education

AN ACT providing for high school graduation standards and sup-
plementing Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

1 BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
2 *of New Jersey:*

1 1. By July 1, ***[1979]*** **1980** the ***[State Department]*** **Com-*
2 *missioner** of Education **with the approval of the State Board of*
3 *Education** shall establish a program of standards for graduation
3A from secondary school. Such a program shall include, but not be
3B limited to:

4 a. The development of a Statewide assessment test in ***[com-**
5 *municaton]** **reading, writing** and computational skills to be
6 administered to all secondary school pupils as provided herein;

7 b. Clear and explicit Statewide levels of proficiency in ***[com-**
8 *munication]** **reading, writing** and computational skills to be
9 demonstrated as a minnum requirement for high school gradua-
9A tion;

10 c. Guidelines for the development of graduation standards by
11 local boards of education;

12 d. Guidelines for remediation procedures for pupils who fail to
13 meet graduation standards; and

14 e. ***[Special provisions]*** **Guidelines** for graduation standards
15 for those pupils classified pursuant to chapter 46 of Title 18A of
16 the New Jersey Statutes.

1 2. By July 1, ***[1980]*** **1981**, pursuant to guidelines established
2 by the ***[State Department]*** **Commissioner** of Education, each
3 board of education shall establish standards for graduation from

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill
is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

4 its secondary schools. Said standards shall be appropriate to local
5 goals and objectives and shall include, but need not be limited to:

6 a. Satisfactory performance on the Statewide assessment test
7 as provided for in section 1 of this act;

8 b. Demonstration of proficiencies in those subject areas and
9 skills identified by the board as necessary for graduation ***other*
9A *than those assessed by the Statewide assessment tests***.

10 ~~**[Each local board of education shall submit to the]~~~~** [State~~
11 ~~Department]~~~~** The** *Commissioner* of Education **[for ap-~~
12 ~~proval by that department]~~~~** shall monitor local**~~ plans for the
13 assessment of proficiencies required for graduation including
14 techniques and instruments to be used to determine pupil pro-
15 ficiency*; *required programs designed to provide the opportunity*
15A *for pupils to progress toward the mastery of proficiencies required*
15B *for graduation;** and remediation programs for pupils who fail to
15C meet graduation proficiency standards ***in order to assure com-*
15D *pliance with the requirement of this act***.

16 The Commissioner of Education shall, upon request of the local
17 board, provide such technical assistance as may be necessary to
18 aid a district in the planning, implementation and evaluation of
19 graduation standards.

1 *3. Based upon the standard and proficiencies prescribed
2 herein and with the approval of the Commissioner of Education,
3 each board of education shall provide for the awarding of differ-
4 entiated certificates and diplomas to correspond with the varying
5 achievement levels or competencies of its secondary school pupils
6 which shall at a minimum include:

7 a. A certificate of completion for those students who do not meet
8 the State and local graduation standards, and who satisfactorily
9 complete all other requirements for graduation;

10 b. A general diploma for those pupils who meet the State and
11 local graduation standards; and

12 c. An honors diploma for students whose performance in all
13 areas of their high school curriculum is determined by the local
14 board to be outstanding.]*

1 *3. *For any student who does not meet the State and district*
2 *examination standards for graduation by the end of tenth grade,*
3 *the local board of education **when appropriate** shall provide*
3A *additional remedial instruction specifically directed toward mas-*
4 *tery of those proficiencies identified as necessary for the awarding*
5 *of a diploma which may include but need not be limited to an ex-*
6 *tended school year, extended school day, or additional school years.*

8 *Any twelfth grade student who does not meet said requirements*
 9 *but who has met all the credit, curriculum and attendance require-*
 9A *ments shall be eligible for a comprehensive assessment of said*
 10 *proficiencies utilizing techniques and instruments other than*
 11 *standardized tests, which techniques and instruments shall have*
 12 *been approved by the Commissioner of Education as fulfilling State*
 13 *and local graduation requirements.*

1 4. *All students who meet State and local graduation require-*
 2 *ments shall receive a **[diploma endorsed by the Commissioner of*
 3 *Education]** **State endorsed diploma** ; provided, however, that*
 4 *the Commissioner of Education shall approve any State endorsed*
 5 *diploma which utilizes the comprehensive assessment techniques as*
 6 *provided in section 3 of this act.*

7 *Local districts may **not** provide a **high school** diploma to*
 8 *students not meeting these standards. **[, provided that no such*
 9 *local diploma may be awarded until the district has fulfilled all*
 10 *developmental, programmatic and remedial procedures as required*
 10A *herein.]** **Any out-of-school youth or adult age 18 or over who*
 10B *has otherwise met the district graduation requirements but has*
 10C *failed to earn a State endorsed diploma may take a basic skills test*
 10D *which has been developed and administered under the auspices of*
 10E *the Commissioner of Education. Upon passing this test, a State*
 10F *endorsed diploma will be granted.***

11 *Each board of education shall provide, in a format approved by*
 12 *the Commissioner of Education, a performance transcript for each*
 13 *student leaving secondary school.**

1 **[4.]* *5.* Upon adoption by the local board of education, each*
 2 *board of education shall provide each high school pupil and the*
 3 *parents or legal guardians of such pupil with a copy of said board's*
 4 *policy on graduation, including a clear statement of the profi-*
 5 *ciencies required for graduation **[, the certificates and diplomas*
 6 *available,]** and those programs available to assist in attaining*
 7 *those levels of proficiency.*

1 **[5.]* *6.* In the school year which begins in September*
 2 **[1980]* *1981*, and annually thereafter, the State graduation*
 3 *proficiency test shall be administered to all ninth grade pupils and*
 4 *to all other high school pupils who have previously failed to*
 5 *demonstrate mastery of State graduation proficiency standards*
 6 *on said test. The mastery of proficiencies required to fulfill local*
 7 *graduation standards shall be determined as appropriate under*
 8 *local board of education assessment plans.*

1 ***7. The local chief school administrators shall report annually to*
 2 *their local boards of education and to the Commissioner of Educa-*

3 tion the number of students who completed the twelfth grade course
4 requirements and were denied a diploma and the number of students
5 who received State endorsed diplomas;

6 a. By successfully completing the Statewide assessment tests and
7 local requirements;

8 b. By using the comprehensive assessment techniques and meet-
9 ing local requirements, and were not classified pursuant to chapter
10 46 of Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes; and

11 c. By using the comprehensive assessment techniques, meeting
12 local requirements, and were classified pursuant to chapter 46 of
13 Title 18A of the New Jersey Statutes.

14 This report to the commissioner shall be included as a portion of
15 the district annual report required under section 11 of P. L. 1975,
16 c. 212 (C. 18A:7A-11).

1 8. The Commissioner of Education shall also develop rules and
2 regulations for and may issue State endorsed diplomas to those
3 students who have successfully completed a State approved adult
4 high school program.**

1 *[6.]* **[*7.]* ** *9.** The Commissioner of Education shall
2 monitor the results of the implementation of graduation require-
3 ments as provided herein, and shall from time to time, but at least
4 once every 5 years review and evaluate State and local programs,
5 and shall report the results of said review and evaluation to the
6 Governor and the Legislature together with such recommendations
7 for changes as may be appropriate to achieve the purposes of this
7A act.

1 *[7.]* **[*8.]* ** *10.** The graduation standards provided
2 for in this act shall not apply to pupils who shall be scheduled to
3 graduate from secondary school prior to the end of the *[1983-84]*
4 *1984-85* school year.

1 *[8.]* **[*9.]* ** *11.** This act shall take effect immediately
2 for the purposes of the planning and development of graduation
3 standards; however, no board of education shall be required to
4 implement the program required herein prior to the school year
5 which begins in September *[1980]* *1981*.

4 and evaluate State and local programs, and shall report the results
5 of said review and evaluation to the Governor and the Legislature
6 together with such recommendations for changes as may be ap-
7 propriate to achieve the purposes of this act.

1 7. The graduation standards provided for in this act shall not
2 apply to pupils who shall be scheduled to graduate from secondary
3 school prior to the end of the 1983-84 school year.

1 8. This act shall take effect immediately for the purposes of the
2 planning and development of graduation standards; however, no
3 board of education shall be required to implement the program
4 required herein prior to the school year which begins in September
5 1980.

STATEMENT

This bill requires that each school district establish standards for graduation from high school. The graduation standards would include a stated level of performance on a State test in reading, writing and mathematics.

This would be supplemented by local standards in other areas and skills, to conform to local goals and objectives as determined by the district under State guidelines. Each district would submit its plan for the implementation of these standards to the State Department of Education for approval. At a minimum, the plan must include testing instruments to be used and remediation proposals designed to assist pupils in attaining the State and local standards.

Testing would begin in the ninth grade. Depending upon his/her performance by twelfth grade, the high school graduate could receive a certificate of completion, a regular high school diploma or an honors diploma.

This bill allows for a 2-year planning process. The actual testing would begin in the 1980-1981 school year, and would only apply to students who are in the ninth grade at that time, so as not to penalize students who are close to graduation. Thereafter, it would apply to all entering high school pupils.

S. 1154 (1979)

ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1154

[OFFICIAL COPY REPRINT]

with Assembly committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 28, 1979

PROVISIONS:

This bill requires that the Department of Education establish a program of standards for graduation from high school. The program would include:

1. A Statewide test in communication and computational skills.
2. Statewide standards in reading, writing and computational skills established by the commissioner with the approval of the State Board.
3. Local standards for graduation that must at least be equal to those established by the commissioner but may exceed such State standards.
4. Remedial programs for students who fail.
5. A single diploma for graduation, to be awarded only to those students who meet all State and local requirements.

The bill provides for a 2-year planning process. Testing would begin for all 9th grade pupils in the 1981-82 school year. The first class to be affected is the graduating class of 1984-85.

The State Department of Education would establish the State standard, develop guidelines for local standards, and provide technical assistance to local boards.

There would be special provisions for handicapped students.

SENATE COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

1. The implementation of this program will begin in 1981 instead of 1980. This will provide for a more comprehensive planning process. It will also allow time for the full impact of minimum standards testing to take effect. The first students to be affected will be in 6th grade in September 1978 and thus will have the opportunity for 3 years of assessment and remediation if necessary prior to the initiation of the high school testing program.

2. Since the intent of the bill is to improve the educational achievement of New Jersey pupils, the provisions requiring remediation for students who fail have been expanded. Local districts would have to provide intensive remedial programs for any pupil who failed to meet

the standards twice. These programs might include after school and summer programs as appropriate.

3. Much concern has been expressed about exclusive reliance on a single standardized test for the State graduation standard. The committee amendments provide that if a 12th grade student completes all curriculum, attendance and credit requirements but cannot meet graduation requirements, that student would be eligible for a comprehensive evaluation using methods other than a standardized test. Any diploma granted on the basis of evaluation methods other than a standardized test would have to be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

4. The original form of the bill provided for a "certificate of completion" of those students who failed to meet State and local standards. This has created a great deal of controversy which has diverted attention from the basic purposes of this legislation. After due consideration, the sponsor proposed and the committee adopted an amendment which eliminates the certificate but preserves the integrity of the diploma by providing that any pupil who meets State and local graduation requirements would receive a State endorsement on his/her diploma.

If a student does not meet the requirements and has been given every opportunity to do so, including remediation, then the local district could award a local diploma without a State endorsement.

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

1. "One diploma system"—The Senate version of Senate Bill No. 1154 created a two-diploma system. Two diplomas tend to mislead. If it is true that this bill will invest the high school diploma with "meaning," two diplomas will diminish its effect. The "one diploma system" is consistent with the "right to know" principle. If there were two diplomas, most employers, if they pay attention to one's diploma at all, would not be able to distinguish between the State and the local diploma.

2. Local standards—The department has been advised that if districts desire to set standards for graduation that are higher than the State standards, it is important that the local districts do not use the same test. If a district desires to set higher standards, it is certainly appropriate. However, it is important that the State not be a party to a local district setting higher standards than the State has determined to be an appropriate graduation standard.

3. Reducing paper work—The Department of Education has proposed that the administrative task of collecting 600 graduation plans be removed from this bill. The Department of Education feels that the authority to "monitor" all graduation plans is sufficient to ensure that districts are implementing appropriate graduation standards policies.

4. Reporting results of graduation tests—By requiring districts to report the results of the graduation test, according to the proposed amendments, it will add to the accuracy of the reporting and will enable districts to deal with those students who are tested but not with the Statewide assessment tests.

5. Adult Education—The department has proposed that adult education students be eligible to receive a State endorsed diploma.

SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1154

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JULY 27, 1978

SPONSORS:

Senators Feldman, Scardino, Friedland, Ewing, Perskie, and Dodd.

PROVISIONS:

The Senate Education Committee favorably reports this bill which requires that the Department of Education establish a program of standards for graduation from high school. The program would include:

1. A Statewide test in communication and computational skills.
2. Local standards in these and other areas to conform to local goals and objectives.
3. Remedial programs for students who fail.

The bill provides for a 2-year planning process. Testing would begin for all 9th grade pupils in the 1981-82 school year. The first class to be affected is the graduating class of 1984-85.

The State Department of Education would establish the State standard, develop guidelines for local standards, and provide technical assistance to local boards.

There would be special provisions for handicapped students.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

A public hearing was held on Senate Bill No. 1154 on June 20, 1978. After reviewing that testimony and other comments from members of the public and the professional educational groups, the committee adopted the following amendments.

1. The implementation of this program will begin in 1981 instead of 1980. This will provide for a larger planning process. It will also allow time for the full impact of minimum standards testing to take effect. The first students to be affected will be in 6th grade in September 1978 and thus will have the opportunity for 3 years of assessment and remediation if necessary prior to the initiation of the high school testing program.

2. Since the intent of the bill is to improve the educational achievement of New Jersey pupils, the provisions requiring remediation for

students who fail have been expanded. Local districts would have to provide intensive remedial programs for any pupil who failed to meet the standards twice. These programs might include after school and summer programs as appropriate.

3. Much concern has been expressed about exclusive reliance on a single standardized test for the State graduation standard. The committee amendments provide that if a 12th grade student completes all curriculum, attendance and credit requirements but cannot meet graduation requirements, that student would be eligible for a comprehensive evaluation using methods other than a standardized test. This would have to be approved by the Commissioner of Education.

4. The original form of the bill provided for a "certificate of completion" of those students who failed to meet State and local standards. This has created a great deal of controversy which has diverted attention from the basic purposes of this legislation. After due consideration, the sponsor proposed and the committee adopted an amendment which eliminates the certificate but preserves the integrity of the diploma by providing that any pupil who meets State and local graduation requirements would receive a State endorsement on his/her diploma.

If a student does not meet the requirements and has been given every opportunity to do so, including remediation, then the local district could award a local diploma without a State endorsement.

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

DECEMBER 17, 1979

KATHRYN FORSYTH

Governor Brendan Byrne today signed a bill providing for the establishment of minimum graduation standards for New Jersey high school students. The standards will apply to students scheduled to graduate from secondary school in 1985.

The bill, S-1154, was sponsored by Senator Matthew Feldman, (D-Bergen).

The measure directs the Commissioner of Education, with the approval of the State Board of Education, to establish a program of standards for graduation from secondary school by July, 1980. It also directs each local Board of Education to establish standards for graduation appropriate to local goals and objectives but within the State guidelines by July, 1981.

Included in the graduation requirements will be a statewide assessment test in reading, writing and math, administered annually to ninth grade students beginning in 1981. Local school districts may also administer tests in those skills and subjects which they consider essential to their own goals and objectives.

Students who do not meet the examination standards by the time they reach the tenth grade will receive remedial instruction during either an extended school day, an extended school year or additional years in secondary school.

Twelfth grade students who have met all local credit, curriculum and attendance requirements but who have failed to meet the examination requirements will be permitted to be tested by alternative comprehensive assessment methods, which could include oral examinations or a review of the student's school record.

These assessment techniques will be subject to the approval of the Commission of Education, and the use of these tests will be limited to those students who have made "good faith" efforts to pass the statewide standardized exam.

The bill provides that students who meet state and local graduation standards and pass either the standard exam or an approved alternative test, will receive state-endorsed diplomas. Local school districts may not issue their own diplomas for students not meeting state standards.

Local school boards will also be required to provide a performance transcript for each student leaving secondary school, and local school administrators will be required to annually report to their boards and the Commissioner of Education the number of students successfully completing the state and local standard tests, the number of students utilizing alternative comprehensive testing methods and the number of students not receiving state-endorsed diplomas.

A statement from Governor Byrne on the measure is attached.

#

Attachment

I am signing Senate Bill No. 1154 because I believe that enactment of this bill may help to improve the basic skills of our young people graduating high school. This bill mandates the establishment of standards for graduation from secondary school including a statewide assessment test in reading, writing and computational skills, and a program of remediation.

I am concerned, however, that this bill does not go far enough. In order to assure that children have received and mastered those subjects and concepts which are necessary in our society, I believe that statewide course or proficiency requirements should be established.

The Commissioner of Education recently proposed for consideration by the State Board of Education a full program of curricular requirements in areas of communication, computation, natural science, social studies, physical education and health, creative arts and career education.

I urge the State Board to thoroughly review this proposal and to act upon it with all due speed so that 1981 implementation of the basic skills requirements mandated in S-1154 will be buttressed upon more broadly based curricular requirements.

Senator Feldman has introduced legislation, S-3478, which requires the State Board of Education to adopt by April 1980 curricular requirements for high school graduation to be implemented simultaneously with the high school graduation requirements contained in the bill which I am signing today.
