

HOUSE CS FOR CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 133(FIN)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/25/01

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): SENATE HEALTH, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to a two-year transition for implementation of the public high school**
2 **competency examination and to establishing a secondary student competency**
3 **examination as a high school graduation requirement; relating to certain reports**
4 **regarding academic performance of schools; and providing for an effective date."**

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

6 * **Section 1.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section
7 to read:

8 PURPOSE AND INTENT. (a) As part of the state's quality schools initiative, the
9 purpose of this Act is to maximize the opportunity for the success of all public school students
10 by (1) continuing to measure student performance through appropriate testing based on
11 specific standards; (2) allowing the Department of Education and Early Development to
12 continue to develop and perfect the competency examination to allow measurement of
13 minimum competency in essential skills and to perfect the testing method; (3) ensuring that
14 school districts and families receive performance data from standards-based assessments of

1 students; and (4) encouraging schools and school districts to develop and promote
 2 endorsements and awards that document high levels of academic, artistic, and vocational
 3 achievement by graduating students. The performance data is to be used to better determine
 4 appropriate academic intervention and support for students.

5 (b) The purpose of the change of date made by sec. 7 of this Act is to

6 (1) allow for specific high standards to be set and maintained for public
 7 schools in the state; and

8 (2) ensure maximum opportunity for all students to learn and for school
 9 districts to improve.

10 (c) It is the intent of sec. 2 of this Act to establish a secondary student competency
 11 examination that focuses on the minimum competencies in essential skills in the areas of
 12 reading, English, and mathematics that a student should have to know in order to function in
 13 our society.

14 (d) It is the intent of the legislature that the Department of Education and Early
 15 Development, through its existing federally required monitoring program of district special
 16 education programs, review the potential for an individualized education program team's
 17 inappropriate lowering of individualized education program goals and objectives for the
 18 purpose of providing a diploma to a student who has not achieved the state performance
 19 standards to the maximum extent practicable and take appropriate corrective action.

20 * **Sec. 2.** AS 14.03.075, enacted by sec. 1, ch. 58, SLA 1997, is amended to read:

21 **Sec. 14.03.075. Secondary student [PUPIL] competency testing.** (a) A
 22 **student** [PUPIL] may not be issued a secondary school diploma unless the **student**
 23 [PUPIL] passes a competency examination in the areas of reading, English, and
 24 mathematics **or receives a waiver from the governing body. A governing body**
 25 **may not grant a waiver to a student before the student's final semester of**
 26 **attendance.** The department shall determine the form and contents of the examination
 27 and shall score completed examinations. [A PUPIL WHO FAILS TO PASS THE
 28 EXAMINATION REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION AND WHO IS NO
 29 LONGER IN ATTENDANCE SHALL RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF
 30 ATTENDANCE FROM THE SCHOOL DISTRICT INDICATING THE YEARS OF
 31 ATTENDANCE AND THAT THE PUPIL HAS NOT PASSED A COMPETENCY

1 EXAMINATION OR RECEIVED A DIPLOMA.]

2 (b) A **student** [PUPIL] who fails the examination required under this section
 3 **shall be retested at least once during a school year on those portions of the**
 4 **examination that the student has not passed. A student who passes any portion**
 5 **of the test may not retake that portion of the test** [MAY BE REEXAMINED. A
 6 REEXAMINATION MAY NOT BE OFFERED MORE OFTEN THAN ONCE
 7 EVERY THREE MONTHS AND MUST OCCUR WITHIN THREE YEARS AFTER
 8 THE DATE THE PUPIL IS NO LONGER IN ATTENDANCE]. A **student** [PUPIL]
 9 who, **when retested,** passes the **portions of the test not previously passed**
 10 [REEXAMINATION] and who meets any other graduation requirements shall receive
 11 a diploma from the school district. **This subsection does not apply to a student who**
 12 **is a child with a disability if the student's individualized education program team**
 13 **recommends that the student not be retested.**

14 * **Sec. 3.** AS 14.03.075, enacted by sec. 1, ch. 58, SLA 1997, is amended by adding new
 15 subsections to read:

16 (c) Notwithstanding (a) of this section,

17 (1) a student who is a child with a disability and who does not achieve
 18 a passing score on the examination required under (a) of this section is eligible to
 19 receive a diploma if the student successfully completes an alternative assessment
 20 program required by the student's individualized education program or required in the
 21 education plan developed for the student under 29 U.S.C. 794; an alternative
 22 assessment program must, to the maximum extent possible, conform to state
 23 performance standards established for the competency examination required under (a)
 24 of this section; and

25 (2) a student who transfers into a public high school in this state shall
 26 receive a diploma if the student

27 (A) meets graduation requirements imposed by the governing
 28 body and the state; and

29 (B) has passed a competency examination in the state from
 30 which the student transferred.

31 (d) A student who fails to qualify for the issuance of a diploma under (a) of

1 this section or a retest under (b) of this section by the end of the student's final
 2 semester of attendance, but who has met all other graduation requirements of a
 3 governing body and the state, shall be awarded a certificate of achievement. A
 4 certificate of achievement may include the following information:

5 (1) the portions of the examination described under (a) of this section
 6 that were passed;

7 (2) the student's attendance record; and

8 (3) other information indicating the qualifications of the student that
 9 the governing body determines appropriate.

10 (e) The department shall by regulation establish uniform standards for

11 (1) pre-examination study materials; and

12 (2) procedures to be followed during administration of an examination.

13 (f) A student shall receive an endorsement on the student's diploma and
 14 transcript identifying the areas of the examination successfully passed.

15 (g) The department shall by regulation establish uniform standards for an
 16 alternative assessment program required under (c)(1) of this section. The alternative
 17 assessment program required under (c)(1) of this section applicable to an individual
 18 student may not be changed after February 1 of the student's junior year of study.

19 (h) In this section,

20 (1) "child with a disability" has the meaning given "children with
 21 disabilities" in AS 14.30.350;

22 (2) "individualized education program team" has the meaning given in
 23 AS 14.30.350.

24 * **Sec. 4.** AS 14.03 is amended by adding a new section to read:

25 **Sec. 14.03.078. Report.** The department shall provide to the legislature by
 26 February 15 of each year an annual report regarding the progress of each school and
 27 school district toward high academic performance by all students. The report required
 28 under this section must include

29 (1) information described under AS 14.03.120(d);

30 (2) the number and percentage of students in each school who pass the
 31 examination required under AS 14.03.075, and the number who pass each section of

1 the examination;

2 (3) progress of the department

3 (A) toward implementing the school accountability provisions
4 of AS 14.03.123; and

5 (B) in assisting high schools to become accredited;

6 (4) a description of the resources provided to each school and school
7 district for coordinated school improvement activities and staff training in each school
8 and school district;

9 (5) each school district's and each school's progress in aligning
10 curriculum with state education performance standards;

11 (6) a description of the efforts by the department to assist a public
12 school that receives a designation of deficient or in crisis;

13 (7) a description of intervention efforts by each school district and
14 school for students who are not meeting state performance standards;

15 (8) the number and percentage of turnover in certificated personnel and
16 superintendents;

17 (9) the number of teachers by district and by school who are teaching
18 outside the teacher's area of endorsement but in areas tested by the high school
19 competency examination.

20 * **Sec. 5.** AS 14.03.120(d) is amended to read:

21 (d) Annually, before the date set by the district under (e) of this section, each
22 public school shall provide, in a public meeting of parents, students, and community
23 members, a report on the school's performance and the performance of the school's
24 students. The report shall be prepared on a form prescribed by the department and
25 must include

26 (1) information on accreditation;

27 (2) results of norm-referenced achievement tests;

28 (3) results of state standards-based assessments in reading, writing, and
29 mathematics;

30 (4) a description, including quantitative and qualitative measures, of
31 student, parent, community, and business involvement in student learning;

1 (5) a description of the school's attendance, retention, dropout, and
 2 graduation rates, **including the number and percentage of students who received a**
 3 **diploma under a waiver from the competency examination required under**
 4 **AS 14.03.075(a)**, as specified by the state board;

5 (6) the annual percent of enrollment change, regardless of reason, and
 6 the annual percent of enrollment change due to student transfers into and out of the
 7 school district; and

8 (7) if Native language education is provided, a summary and
 9 evaluation of the curriculum described in AS 14.30.420.

10 * **Sec. 6.** AS 14.07.165 is amended to read:

11 **Sec. 14.07.165. Duties.** The board shall adopt

12 (1) statewide goals and require each governing body to adopt written
 13 goals that are consistent with local needs;

14 (2) regulations regarding the application for and award of grants under
 15 AS 14.03.125;

16 (3) regulations implementing provisions of AS 14.11.014(b);

17 (4) regulations requiring approval by the board before a charter school,
 18 state boarding school, or a public school may provide domiciliary services;

19 **(5) regulations implementing the secondary school student**
 20 **competency examination provisions of AS 14.03.075, including the criteria and**
 21 **procedure under which a governing body uses a waiver to grant a diploma to a**
 22 **student; criteria regarding granting a waiver must include provisions that a**
 23 **waiver may only be granted for students who enter the system late or have rare**
 24 **or unusual circumstances meriting a waiver.**

25 * **Sec. 7.** Section 3, ch. 58, SLA 1997, is amended to read:

26 Sec. 3. Section 1 of this Act takes effect **February 1, 2004** [JANUARY 1,
 27 2002].

28 * **Sec. 8.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
 29 read:

30 INTERIM STUDENT COMPETENCY TESTING. (a) Beginning February 1, 2002,
 31 and ending January 31, 2004, and as directed by the state Board of Education and Early

1 Development, the governing body of each school district in the state shall give the
 2 competency examination described in sec. 1, ch. 58, SLA 1997, at least twice each school
 3 year. The results of the examination of a student under this section shall be reflected (1) in
 4 that student's transcript in a manner that indicates which sections of the examination were
 5 passed; and (2) as endorsements on the student's diploma that reflect the sections of the
 6 examination that were passed, as directed by the state Board of Education and Early
 7 Development.

8 (b) A student shall be retested at least once during a school year on those portions of
 9 the competency examination described in sec. 1, ch. 58, SLA 1997, that the student has not
 10 passed. This subsection does not apply to a student who is a child with a disability if the
 11 student's individualized education program team recommends that the student not be retested.
 12 In this subsection,

13 (1) "child with a disability" has the meaning given "children with disabilities"
 14 in AS 14.30.350;

15 (2) "individualized education program team" has the meaning given in
 16 AS 14.30.350.

17 * **Sec. 9.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
 18 read:

19 **REQUIRED REPORT.** The Department of Education and Early Development shall,
 20 by February 15, 2002, report back to the Alaska State Legislature with recommendations for
 21 an appeals process for a student who is denied a high school diploma.

22 * **Sec. 10.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
 23 read:

24 **REPORT.** The Department of Education and Early Development shall, by
 25 February 15, 2002, deliver a report to the Alaska State Legislature that describes the proposed
 26 criteria and procedure under which a school district could use a waiver to grant a diploma to a
 27 student and that recommends statutory changes to the competency examination waiver
 28 requirements that the department determines are necessary to maintain the school
 29 accountability provisions of AS 14.03.123.

30 * **Sec. 11.** Section 3 of this Act takes effect on the effective date of sec. 1, ch. 58, SLA
 31 1997, as amended by this Act.

1 * **Sec. 12.** Except as provided in sec. 11 of this Act, this Act takes effect immediately under
2 AS 01.10.070(c).