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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 1497

03/05/2015 Authored by Urdahl, Daudt, Ward, Erickson, Miller and others
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Education Innovation Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; amending state high school graduation requirements;
1.3 requiring students to demonstrate their knowledge of civics as a condition of
1.4 receiving a high school diploma; amending Minnesota Statutes 2014, sections
1.5 120B.02, subdivision 2, by adding a subdivision; 120B.021, subdivision 1;
1.6 120B.024, subdivision 1; 120B.36, subdivision 1.

1.7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.8 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.02, subdivision 2, is amended to read:

1.9 Subd. 2. **Graduation requirements.** To graduate from high school, students must
1.10 demonstrate to their enrolling school district or school their satisfactory completion of
1.11 the credit requirements under section 120B.024 ~~and~~, their understanding of academic
1.12 standards on a nationally normed college entrance exam, and their knowledge and
1.13 understanding of the fundamentals of United States history and government, including
1.14 civics, under subdivision 3. A school district must adopt graduation requirements that
1.15 meet or exceed state graduation requirements established in law or rule.

1.16 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.02, is amended by adding a subdivision
1.17 to read:

1.18 Subd. 3. **Required knowledge and understanding of civics.** (a) For purposes of
1.19 this subdivision, "civics test" means the 100 questions that, as of January 1, 2015, United
1.20 States citizenship and immigration services officers use to select the questions they pose
1.21 to applicants for naturalization so the applicants can demonstrate their knowledge and
1.22 understanding of the fundamentals of United States history and government, as required
1.23 by United States Code, title 8, section 1423.

2.1 (b) To receive a high school diploma, a student enrolled in a school under section
 2.2 120A.22, subdivision 4, or a student enrolled in an adult basic education program under
 2.3 section 124D.52 who is pursuing a high school diploma or equivalency certificate, must
 2.4 correctly answer at least 60 of the 100 civics test questions. A school or district must
 2.5 record on a student's transcript that the student passed the civics test. A home-school
 2.6 student is subject to this requirement if the student receives a diploma from a school other
 2.7 than a home school. A school or district may exempt a student with disabilities from
 2.8 this requirement if the student's individualized education program team determines the
 2.9 requirement is inappropriate and establishes an alternative requirement. A school or
 2.10 district may administer the civics test in a language other than English to students who
 2.11 qualify for English learner services.

2.12 (c) Schools and districts: (1) must determine the form and manner in which to
 2.13 administer the civics test as part of the social studies curriculum; and (2) may allow
 2.14 a secondary school student to take the test in whole or in part beginning in grade 7 and
 2.15 to retake the test or any part of the test until the student correctly answers 60 of 100
 2.16 test questions.

2.17 (d) The commissioner and public schools and school districts must not charge
 2.18 students any fees related to this subdivision.

2.19 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective for students graduating in the
 2.20 2016-2017 school year and later.

2.21 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.021, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

2.22 Subdivision 1. **Required academic standards.** (a) The following subject areas
 2.23 are required for statewide accountability:

2.24 (1) language arts;

2.25 (2) mathematics;

2.26 (3) science;

2.27 (4) social studies, including history, geography, economics, and government and
 2.28 citizenship that includes civics consistent with section 120B.02, subdivision 3;

2.29 (5) physical education;

2.30 (6) health, for which locally developed academic standards apply; and

2.31 (7) the arts, for which statewide or locally developed academic standards apply, as

2.32 determined by the school district. Public elementary and middle schools must offer at least

2.33 three and require at least two of the following four arts areas: dance; music; theater; and

2.34 visual arts. Public high schools must offer at least three and require at least one of the

2.35 following five arts areas: media arts; dance; music; theater; and visual arts.

3.1 (b) For purposes of applicable federal law, the academic standards for language arts,
3.2 mathematics, and science apply to all public school students, except the very few students
3.3 with extreme cognitive or physical impairments for whom an individualized education
3.4 program team has determined that the required academic standards are inappropriate. An
3.5 individualized education program team that makes this determination must establish
3.6 alternative standards.

3.7 (c) District efforts to develop, implement, or improve instruction or curriculum
3.8 as a result of the provisions of this section must be consistent with sections 120B.10,
3.9 120B.11, and 120B.20.

3.10 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

3.11 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.024, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

3.12 Subdivision 1. **Graduation requirements.** Students beginning 9th grade in the
3.13 2011-2012 school year and later must successfully complete the following high school
3.14 level credits for graduation:

3.15 (1) four credits of language arts sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards
3.16 in English language arts;

3.17 (2) three credits of mathematics, including an algebra II credit or its equivalent,
3.18 sufficient to satisfy all of the academic standards in mathematics;

3.19 (3) an algebra I credit by the end of 8th grade sufficient to satisfy all of the 8th
3.20 grade standards in mathematics;

3.21 (4) three credits of science, including at least one credit of biology, one credit of
3.22 chemistry or physics, and one elective credit of science. The combination of credits under
3.23 this clause must be sufficient to satisfy (i) all of the academic standards in either chemistry
3.24 or physics and (ii) all other academic standards in science;

3.25 (5) three and one-half credits of social studies, encompassing at least United States
3.26 history, geography, government and citizenship that includes civics consistent with section
3.27 120B.02, subdivision 3, world history, and economics sufficient to satisfy all of the
3.28 academic standards in social studies;

3.29 (6) one credit of the arts sufficient to satisfy all of the state or local academic
3.30 standards in the arts; and

3.31 (7) a minimum of seven elective credits.

3.32 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.

3.33 Sec. 5. Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.36, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

4.1 Subdivision 1. **School performance reports.** (a) The commissioner shall report
4.2 student academic performance under section 120B.35, subdivision 2; the percentages of
4.3 students showing low, medium, and high growth under section 120B.35, subdivision
4.4 3, paragraph (b); school safety and student engagement and connection under section
4.5 120B.35, subdivision 3, paragraph (d); rigorous coursework under section 120B.35,
4.6 subdivision 3, paragraph (c); the percentage of students under section 120B.35,
4.7 subdivision 3, paragraph (b), clause (2), whose progress and performance levels are
4.8 meeting career and college readiness benchmarks under sections 120B.30, subdivision 1,
4.9 and 120B.35, subdivision 3, paragraph (e); longitudinal data on the progress of eligible
4.10 districts in reducing disparities in students' academic achievement and realizing racial and
4.11 economic integration under section 124D.861; the acquisition of English, and where
4.12 practicable, native language academic literacy, including oral academic language, and the
4.13 academic progress of English learners under section 124D.59, subdivisions 2 and 2a; the
4.14 total number of students by grade taking the civics test under section 120B.02, subdivision
4.15 3, and the number of students by grade who correctly answered at least 60 questions; two
4.16 separate student-to-teacher ratios that clearly indicate the definition of teacher consistent
4.17 with sections 122A.06 and 122A.15 for purposes of determining these ratios; staff
4.18 characteristics excluding salaries; student enrollment demographics; district mobility; and
4.19 extracurricular activities. The report also must indicate a school's adequate yearly progress
4.20 status under applicable federal law, and must not set any designations applicable to high-
4.21 and low-performing schools due solely to adequate yearly progress status.

4.22 (b) The commissioner shall develop, annually update, and post on the department
4.23 Web site school performance reports.

4.24 (c) The commissioner must make available performance reports by the beginning
4.25 of each school year.

4.26 (d) A school or district may appeal its adequate yearly progress status in writing to
4.27 the commissioner within 30 days of receiving the notice of its status. The commissioner's
4.28 decision to uphold or deny an appeal is final.

4.29 (e) School performance data are nonpublic data under section 13.02, subdivision 9,
4.30 until the commissioner publicly releases the data. The commissioner shall annually post
4.31 school performance reports to the department's public Web site no later than September 1,
4.32 except that in years when the reports reflect new performance standards, the commissioner
4.33 shall post the school performance reports no later than October 1.

4.34 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day following final enactment.