

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Temporary alternative to the state math test required for high school graduation

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Overview

Establishes a temporary alternative for the 2009-2010 through 2013-2014 school years only to the state math GRAD tests so that students who do not pass the math GRAD test but satisfactorily complete all coursework and credits required for graduation and participate in academic remediation and two GRAD re-test attempts are eligible to receive a diploma. Repeals the math GRAD requirements as of June 30, 2014, and prohibits the education commissioner from implementing an alternative math assessment without specific legislative authority. Prohibits “high stakes” high school science assessments. Directs the Office of Educational Accountability to facilitate an advisory group to recommend how best to motivate students and improve student academic achievement.

Section

1 **Statewide testing.** (a) Requires state-developed tests to include multiple choice instead of machine-scoreable questions. Requires students who are still subject to the Minnesota basic skills tests but do not pass those basic skills tests by the end of the 2011-2012 school year to take the math graduation-required assessments for diploma as a condition of graduating from high school.

(c) Allows students enrolled in grade 8 in any school year between the 2005-2006 and 2009-2010 school year who do not pass the math graduation-required assessment for diploma to receive a diploma with a passing state notation if they satisfactorily complete all coursework and credits required for graduation and participate in academic remediation and two re-test attempts in math. Directs districts issuing high school diplomas in the 2009-2010 through the 2013-2014 school years to record a student’s high school transcript the student’s score on the state math GRAD test.

Also allows a school board to include a notation of high achievement on students’ high school diplomas indicating exemplary academic achievement during high school based on board-established criteria.

(d) At the recommendation of the Minnesota Department of Education, strikes language no longer applicable in the context of testing students with disabilities or limited English proficiency.

Makes the section immediately effective. Makes paragraph (c) applicable to the 2009-2010 through 2013-2014 school years only. Repeals the requirements related to the math graduation-required assessment for diploma as of June 30, 2014, and prohibits the education commissioner from implementing any alternative math assessment without specific legislative authority.

- 2 Statewide and local assessments; results.** (a) Prohibits the education commissioner from requiring students to receive a passing score on any high school level science assessment as a condition of receiving a high school diploma.

Makes this section immediately effective.

- 3 Examining the characteristics and impact of “high stakes” math and science tests in the context of awarding high school diplomas.**

(a) To determine state policy for administering “high stakes” math and science tests in the context of awarding high school diplomas, directs the Office of Educational Accountability (OEA) to convene and facilitate an advisory group that includes measurement experts, regionally diverse school district research and evaluation directors, school administrators, higher education faculty at two-year and four-year institutions, licensed math and science teachers, the Minnesota Department of Education director of evaluation and testing, parents, representatives of the business community, the public, mathematicians, scientists, and workforce development experts to consider and recommend how best to motivate students and improve students’ academic achievement in the context of “high stakes” math and science exams required for high school graduation. Directs the advisory group to at least evaluate and make recommendations on: (1) particular kinds of math and science exams that Minnesota might use as “high stakes” exams to award or deny students a high school diploma; (2) appropriate levels of high school math and science proficiency and the educational support to help students achieve those proficiency levels; (3) the relationship between math and science proficiency levels and state definitions of college and career readiness; (4) the interrelationship between requiring students to demonstrate math and science proficiency and college or career readiness, and awarding or denying students a high school diploma; (5) the interrelationship between “high stakes” testing and other coursework and credits required for graduation or college and career readiness; and (6) appropriate accommodations for students with individualized education plans and students with limited English proficiency in some circumstances.

(b) Exempts the advisory group from the effect of the statutory provision (M.S., section 15.059) governing the terms, compensation, and removal of members of advisory councils and committees. Directs the OEA to present the advisory group’s evaluation and recommendations to the legislature by February 15, 2010. Causes the group to expire on June 1, 2010.

Makes this section immediately effective.

