

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1392
Version: As introduced

DATE: March 7, 2015

Authors: Bennett and others

Subject: Changing statewide testing requirements

Analyst: Lisa Larson

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: www.house.mn/hrd/.

Overview

The 2013 Legislature enacted a new testing law that changed high school graduation requirements. The new assessments focused on math, reading and writing, and career expectations and college readiness. The new law allowed students in grade 8 in any school year through the 2011-2012 school year who met state and district credit requirements but who previously failed to pass a “high stakes” test to take an alternate assessment in order to graduate from high school. Students did not need to achieve a specified score or level of proficiency on any of the alternate assessments or on any of the new assessments that applied to students in grade 8 beginning in the 2012-2013 school year and later. The assessments that applied to students in grade 8 in the 2012-2013 school year and later were premised on expectations for careers and college readiness. These expectations were based on career and college-ready benchmarks intended to let students, parents, and teachers know how well students must perform to have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without need for postsecondary remediation. The new suite of assessments included: career exploration and planning beginning no later than grade 9; math, reading, and writing tests in grades 8 and 10; and college placement and entrance exams in grades 10 and 11.

This bill proposes to change the statewide system of assessments and high school graduation requirements by requiring computer-adaptive reading and math assessments in grades 3 through 8 instead of through grade 7 and high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math, which students in grade 8 in the 2014-2015 school year and later must take in order to graduate from high school.

Section

- 1 Graduation requirements.** Requires high school students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2014-2015 school year and later to demonstrate their understanding of required academic standards

Section

on state-developed reading, writing and math tests instead of a nationally normed college entrance exam as a condition of graduating from high school.

- 2 **Performance measures.** Includes students' performance on the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math related to readiness for a certificate level program or a two-year or four-year college program among the performance measures used to determine school district and school site progress in creating the world's best workforce.
- 3 **Statewide testing.** (a) Requires the education commissioner to annually administer computer-adaptive reading and math assessments aligned with state academic standards to all students in grades 3 through 8 instead of through grade 7. Allows students enrolled in grade 8 through the 2009-2010 school year and students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2010-2011 or 2011-2012 school year to take the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math as an alternate assessment in order to graduate from high school. Allows students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2012-2013 or 2013-2014 school year to take the ACT assessment for college admission or the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math in order to graduate from high school.
 - (c) Requires students enrolled in grade 8 in the 2014-2015 school year and later to take the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math as an alternate assessment in order to graduate from high school.
 - (d) Strikes language stating students need not achieve a specified score or level of proficiency on a required statewide assessment in order to graduate from high school. Strikes language directing the education commissioner to contract for a series of assessments aligned with state academic standards that include college and career readiness benchmarks. Strikes language requiring grade 8 and 10 statewide math, reading, and writing assessments be predictive of a nationally normed assessment for career and college readiness.
 - (e) Requires a nationally recognized college entrance exam be offered to students at no cost in grade 11 or 12. Strikes language requiring that the statewide series of assessments include a college placement diagnostic exam and contain career exploration elements.
 - (g) Strikes language requiring school districts and schools annually to use the career exploration elements in the statewide assessments to help students and their families explore and plan for postsecondary education or careers based on students' interests, aptitudes, and aspirations. Strikes language requiring students in grade 10 or 11 who are not yet academically ready for a career or college based on their growth in academic achievement between grades 8 and 10 to take a college placement diagnostic exam before taking the college entrance exam so students, their families, the school, and the district can use the exam results for targeted instruction, intervention, or remediation sufficient for the student to graduate and have a reasonable chance to succeed in a career or college without remediation.
 - (i) Strikes language directing the education commissioner to determine the alignment between statewide assessments and state academic standards and, where alignment exists, to seek federal approval to replace federally required assessments with the statewide assessments being stricken in this section.

Section

(j) Directs the MnSCU chancellor, in consultation with the education commissioner, to identify the minimum scores on the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math that demonstrate readiness for a certificate level program or a two-year or four-year college program.

(m), (n), (o) Require the education commissioner to annually administer computer-adaptive reading and math assessments aligned with state academic standards to all students in grades 3 through 8 instead of through grade 7.

Makes this section effective for the 2015-2016 school year and later.

- 4** **Statewide and local assessments.; results.** Makes conforming changes to reflect other changes to the statewide testing system related to administering computer-adaptive reading and math assessments aligned with state academic standards to all students in grades 3 through 8 instead of through grade 7 and the high school Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments (MCAs) in reading, writing, and math.

Makes this section effective for the 2016-2017 school year and later.

- 5** **Educational planning and assessment system (EPAS) program.** Makes the fiscal year 2014 appropriation for the educational planning and assessment system program available through the 2020 fiscal year instead of through fiscal year 2015.

Makes this section effective immediately.

- 6** **Repealer.** Repeals Minnesota Statutes 2014, section 120B.128, governing the educational planning and assessment system (EPAS) program offered by ACT, on August 1, 2015.