
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 1000 (File 197, as amended by Senate "A")*

AN ACT CONCERNING THE BOARD EXAMINATION SERIES PROGRAM.

SUMMARY:

This bill requires the State Department of Education (SDE) to establish an academic advancement program that allows students in grades 11 and 12 to fulfill statutory high school graduation requirements by accomplishing three substitute achievements. Students must:

1. achieve a passing score on an existing SDE-approved national examination, or on a series of examinations approved by the State Board of Education (SBE);
2. achieve a certain SBE-approved cumulative grade point average; and
3. obtain at least three letters of recommendation from school professionals.

The academic advancement program replaces the board examination series pilot program in current law. SDE has chosen not to establish such an optional pilot program to date.

The bill requires local or regional boards of education to allow students to graduate from high school upon completing the academic advancement program beginning in the 2013-14 school year. SBE must give an academic advancement program certificate to any student who successfully completes such program. Connecticut public colleges and universities must equate the certificate with a high school diploma when determining enrollment eligibility.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

*Senate Amendment "A":

1. renames the "board examination series" the "academic advancement program;"
2. limits student participation in the program to grades 11 and 12, rather than grades nine to 12;
3. allows SDE to choose an existing national examination to be used as part of the program;
4. adds grade point average and letter of recommendation requirements for student participants;
5. requires the program to begin during the 2013-14 school year, rather than 2014-2015; and
6. makes various technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2013

BACKGROUND

Board Examination Series Pilot Program

Students who achieve passing scores on the board examination series pilot program may use those scores to fulfill high school graduation requirements (CGS § 10-5c). Passing scores substitute for graduation requirements such as completing a minimum number of required credit hours in prescribed subject areas (20 credits through the 2018-19 academic year and 25 credits beginning with the 2019-20 year) (CGS 10-221a). SBE must give a board examination certificate to any student who successfully completes this pilot program, which Connecticut public colleges and universities must equate with a high school diploma when determining whether a student is eligible to enroll (CGS § 10-5c).

School Professionals

By law, a school professional is a school teacher, administrator, or other SBE-certified personnel (CGS § 10-66dd).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 34 Nay 0 (03/13/2013)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 47 Nay 3 (04/30/2013)