



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 502

January Session, 2015

Substitute Senate Bill No. 1059

Senate, April 7, 2015

The Committee on Education reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 10-221a of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

3 (a) For classes graduating from 1988 to 2003, inclusive, no local or
4 regional board of education shall permit any student to graduate from
5 high school or grant a diploma to any student who has not
6 satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty credits, not fewer than
7 four of which shall be in English, not fewer than three in mathematics,
8 not fewer than three in social studies, not fewer than two in science,
9 not fewer than one in the arts or vocational education and not fewer
10 than one in physical education.

11 (b) For classes graduating from 2004 to [2019] 2020, inclusive, no
12 local or regional board of education shall permit any student to
13 graduate from high school or grant a diploma to any student who has

14 not satisfactorily completed a minimum of twenty credits, not fewer
15 than four of which shall be in English, not fewer than three in
16 mathematics, not fewer than three in social studies, including at least a
17 one-half credit course on civics and American government, not fewer
18 than two in science, not fewer than one in the arts or vocational
19 education and not fewer than one in physical education.

20 (c) Commencing with classes graduating in [2020] 2021, and for each
21 graduating class thereafter, no local or regional board of education
22 shall permit any student to graduate from high school or grant a
23 diploma to any student who has not satisfactorily completed (1) a
24 minimum of twenty-five credits, including not fewer than: (A) Nine
25 credits in the humanities, including not fewer than (i) four credits in
26 English, including composition; (ii) three credits in social studies,
27 including at least one credit in American history and at least one-half
28 credit in civics and American government; (iii) one credit in fine arts;
29 and (iv) one credit in a humanities elective; (B) eight credits in science,
30 technology, engineering and mathematics, including not fewer than (i)
31 four credits in mathematics, including algebra I, geometry and algebra
32 II or probability and statistics; (ii) three credits in science, including at
33 least one credit in life science and at least one credit in physical science;
34 and (iii) one credit in a science, technology, engineering and
35 mathematics elective; (C) three and one-half credits in career and life
36 skills, including not fewer than (i) one credit in physical education; (ii)
37 one-half credit in health and safety education, as described in section
38 10-16b; and (iii) two credits in career and life skills electives, such as
39 career and technical education, English as a second language,
40 community service, personal finance, public speaking and nutrition
41 and physical activity; (D) two credits in world languages, subject to the
42 provisions of subsection (g) of this section; and (E) a one credit senior
43 demonstration project or its equivalent, as approved by the State Board
44 of Education; and (2) end of the school year examinations for the
45 following courses: (A) Algebra I, (B) geometry, (C) biology, (D)
46 American history, and (E) grade ten English.

47 (d) Commencing with classes graduating in [2020] 2021, and for

48 each graduating class thereafter, local and regional boards of education
49 shall provide adequate student support and remedial services for
50 students beginning in grade seven. Such student support and remedial
51 services shall provide alternate means for a student to complete any of
52 the high school graduation requirements or end of the school year
53 examinations described in subsection (c) of this section, if such student
54 is unable to satisfactorily complete any of the required courses or
55 exams. Such student support and remedial services shall include, but
56 not be limited to, (1) allowing students to retake courses in summer
57 school or through an on-line course; (2) allowing students to enroll in a
58 class offered at a constituent unit of the state system of higher
59 education, as defined in section 10a-1, pursuant to subdivision (4) of
60 subsection (g) of this section; (3) allowing students who received a
61 failing score, as determined by the Commissioner of Education, on an
62 end of the school year exam to take an alternate form of the exam; and
63 (4) allowing those students whose individualized education programs
64 state that such students are eligible for an alternate assessment to
65 demonstrate competency on any of the five core courses through
66 success on such alternate assessment.

67 (e) Any student who presents a certificate from a physician or
68 advanced practice registered nurse stating that, in the opinion of the
69 physician or advanced practice registered nurse, participation in
70 physical education is medically contraindicated because of the physical
71 condition of such student, shall be excused from the physical
72 education requirement, provided the credit for physical education may
73 be fulfilled by an elective.

74 (f) Determination of eligible credits shall be at the discretion of the
75 local or regional board of education, provided the primary focus of the
76 curriculum of eligible credits corresponds directly to the subject matter
77 of the specified course requirements. The local or regional board of
78 education may permit a student to graduate during a period of
79 expulsion pursuant to section 10-233d, if the board determines the
80 student has satisfactorily completed the necessary credits pursuant to
81 this section. The requirements of this section shall apply to any student

82 requiring special education pursuant to section 10-76a, except when
83 the planning and placement team for such student determines the
84 requirement not to be appropriate. For purposes of this section, a
85 credit shall consist of not less than the equivalent of a forty-minute
86 class period for each school day of a school year except for a credit or
87 part of a credit toward high school graduation earned (1) at an
88 institution accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or
89 Office of Higher Education or regionally accredited, (2) through on-
90 line coursework that is in accordance with a policy adopted pursuant
91 to subsection (g) of this section, or (3) through a demonstration of
92 mastery based on competency and performance standards, in
93 accordance with guidelines adopted by the State Board of Education.

94 (g) Only courses taken in grades nine to twelve, inclusive, shall
95 satisfy [this] the graduation [requirement] requirements set forth in
96 this section, except that a local or regional board of education may
97 grant a student credit (1) toward meeting a specified course
98 requirement upon the successful completion in grade seven or eight of
99 any course, the primary focus of which corresponds directly to the
100 subject matter of a specified course requirement in grades nine to
101 twelve, inclusive; (2) toward meeting the high school graduation
102 requirement upon the successful completion of a world language
103 course (A) in grade six, seven or eight, (B) through on-line coursework,
104 or (C) offered privately through a nonprofit provider, provided such
105 student achieves a passing grade on an examination prescribed, within
106 available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education and such
107 credits do not exceed four; (3) toward meeting the high school
108 graduation requirement upon achievement of a passing grade on a
109 subject area proficiency examination identified and approved, within
110 available appropriations, by the Commissioner of Education,
111 regardless of the number of hours the student spent in a public school
112 classroom learning such subject matter; (4) toward meeting the high
113 school graduation requirement upon the successful completion of
114 coursework during the school year or summer months at an institution
115 accredited by the Board of Regents for Higher Education or Office of
116 Higher Education or regionally accredited. One three-credit semester

117 course, or its equivalent, at such an institution shall equal one-half
118 credit for purposes of this section; (5) toward meeting the high school
119 graduation requirement upon the successful completion of on-line
120 coursework, provided the local or regional board of education has
121 adopted a policy in accordance with this subdivision for the granting
122 of credit for on-line coursework. Such a policy shall ensure, at a
123 minimum, that (A) the workload required by the on-line course is
124 equivalent to that of a similar course taught in a traditional classroom
125 setting, (B) the content is rigorous and aligned with curriculum
126 guidelines approved by the State Board of Education, where
127 appropriate, (C) the course engages students and has interactive
128 components, which may include, but are not limited to, required
129 interactions between students and their teachers, participation in on-
130 line demonstrations, discussion boards or virtual labs, (D) the program
131 of instruction for such on-line coursework is planned, ongoing and
132 systematic, and (E) the courses are (i) taught by teachers who are
133 certified in the state or another state and have received training on
134 teaching in an on-line environment, or (ii) offered by institutions of
135 higher education that are accredited by the Board of Regents for
136 Higher Education or Office of Higher Education or regionally
137 accredited; or (6) toward meeting the high school graduation
138 requirement upon the successful completion of the academic
139 advancement program, pursuant to section 10-5c.

140 (h) A local or regional board of education may offer one-half credit
141 in community service which, if satisfactorily completed, shall qualify
142 for high school graduation credit pursuant to this section, provided
143 such community service is supervised by a certified school
144 administrator or teacher and consists of not less than fifty hours of
145 actual service that may be performed at times when school is not
146 regularly in session and not less than ten hours of related classroom
147 instruction. For purposes of this section, community service does not
148 include partisan political activities. The State Board of Education shall
149 assist local and regional boards of education in meeting the
150 requirements of this section. The State Board of Education shall award
151 a community service recognition award to any student who

152 satisfactorily completes fifty hours or more of community service in
153 accordance with the provisions of this subsection.

154 (i) (1) A local or regional board of education may award a diploma
155 to a veteran, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, of World
156 War II or the Korean hostilities, as described in section 51-49h, or of the
157 Vietnam Era, as defined in subsection (a) of section 27-103, who
158 withdrew from high school prior to graduation in order to serve in the
159 armed forces of the United States and did not receive a diploma as a
160 consequence of such service.

161 (2) A local or regional board of education may award a diploma to
162 any person who (A) withdrew from high school prior to graduation to
163 work in a job that assisted the war effort during World War II,
164 December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946, inclusive, (B) did not receive a
165 diploma as a consequence of such work, and (C) has been a resident of
166 the state for at least fifty consecutive years.

167 (j) For the school year commencing July 1, 2012, and each school
168 year thereafter, each local and regional board of education shall create
169 a student success plan for each student enrolled in a public school,
170 beginning in grade six. Such student success plan shall include a
171 student's career and academic choices in grades six to twelve,
172 inclusive.

173 Sec. 2. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to
174 study the alignment of the changes to the high school graduation
175 requirements commencing with classes graduating in 2021, pursuant
176 to subsection (c) of section 10-221a of the general statutes, as amended
177 by this act, with the Common Core State Standards, adopted by the
178 State Board of Education on July 7, 2010, pursuant to section 10-4 of the
179 general statutes.

180 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members: (1) The
181 Commissioner of Education, or the commissioner's designee, (2) one
182 representative from each of the following associations, designated by
183 each such association, the Connecticut Association of Boards of

184 Education, the Connecticut Association of Public School
 185 Superintendents, the Connecticut Association of Schools, Connecticut
 186 Federation of School Administrators, the Connecticut Education
 187 Association and the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut,
 188 and (3) two persons selected by the Commissioner of Education,
 189 including, but not limited to, teachers and any other person the
 190 commissioner deems appropriate.

191 (c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than
 192 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be
 193 filled by the appointing authority.

194 (d) The representative from the Connecticut Association of Public
 195 School Superintendents shall serve as the chairperson of the task force.
 196 Such chairperson shall schedule the first meeting of the task force,
 197 which shall be held not later than sixty days after the effective date of
 198 this section.

199 (e) Not later than January 1, 2016, the task force shall submit a
 200 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing
 201 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters
 202 relating to education, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-
 203 4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date
 204 that it submits such report or January 1, 2016, whichever is later.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	10-221a
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	New section

ED *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Delays Cost	3.4-6 million	None
Various State Agencies	GF - Potential Cost	less than 1,000	None

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 16 \$	FY 17 \$
Local and Regional School Districts (statewide)	Delays Cost	14-21 million	None

Explanation

The bill delays, by one year, implementation of the scheduled changes to the state's high school graduation requirements. This will result in a significant cost savings for local and regional school districts. It is anticipated that local and regional school districts would have incurred costs ranging from \$14 million to \$21 million (statewide) to implement the expanded high school graduation requirements. These costs will be delayed for one year.

Additionally, the delay will result in a cost savings to the State Department of Education (SDE). It is anticipated that SDE would have incurred costs ranging from \$3.4 million to \$6 million to develop the model curriculum and prepare local and regional school districts for the change in curriculum. These costs will be delayed for one year.

The bill also creates a nine-member task force to study the alignment of the high school graduation requirement changes with the Common Core State Standards adopted by the State Board of

Education, there may be a cost of less than \$1,000 in FY 16 to those agencies participating in the task force to reimburse legislators and agency staff for mileage expenses.

Additionally, the bill requires SDE to grant a student a community service recognition award if he or she satisfactorily completes at least 50 hours of community service, which is not anticipated to result in fiscal impact, as it is procedural in nature.

The Out Years

The costs and savings identified above are one-time in nature.

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 1059****AN ACT CONCERNING HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.****SUMMARY:**

This bill delays, by one year, implementation of the scheduled changes to the state's school requirements that (1) increase the minimum number of credits, from 20 to 25, required for high school graduation; (2) require students to pass state exams in certain courses and complete a senior project in order to graduate; and (3) require school districts to offer students support and alternative ways to meet the new graduation requirements. These requirements are set in statute and are currently scheduled to apply to the 2020 graduating class (the current seventh grade class). Under the bill, they apply to the 2021 graduating class (the current sixth grade class).

The bill also creates a nine-member task force to study the alignment of the high school graduation requirement changes with the Common Core State Standards adopted by the State Board of Education (SBE) (see BACKGROUND).

The bill also requires SBE to grant a student a community service recognition award if he or she satisfactorily completes at least 50 hours of community service and meets statutory criteria to earn one-half credit toward graduation.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2015, except the task force is effective upon passage.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Starting with the class graduating in 2020, current law requires students to earn 25 credits in specified subjects, pass end-of-year

examinations in five courses, and complete a senior demonstration project to graduate from high school. It requires school districts to provide adequate support and remedial services for students, starting with students in the seventh grade in the 2014-15 school year. The remedial services must include alternative means for a student to complete any of the high school requirements if the student is not otherwise able to complete them. The bill postpones the effective dates of these requirements and the related support and remedial services by a year, so they apply to the class of 2021.

TASK FORCE TO STUDY THE ALIGNMENT OF THE NEW GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS TO THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

The bill establishes a nine-member task force to study the alignment of the class of 2021 high school graduation requirements with the Common Core State Standards.

The task force will include the following members:

1. the education commissioner, or her designee;
2. one representative designated by each of the following six associations: the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS), the Connecticut Association of Schools, the Connecticut Federation of School Administrators, the Connecticut Education Association, and the American Federation of Teachers-Connecticut; and
3. two people selected by the education commissioner, including teachers and any other person the commissioner deems appropriate.

All appointments must be made no later than 30 days after the bill's effective date. Any vacancy must be filled by the appropriate appointing authority.

The CAPSS representative will serve as the chairperson, and he or

she must schedule the first task force meeting no later than 60 days after the bill's effective date.

By January 1, 2016, the task force must submit its report with findings and recommendations to the Education Committee. The task force terminates on January 1, 2016 or the day it submits its report, whichever is later.

BACKGROUND

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards are a set of K-12 education standards for English language arts and mathematics developed by the National Governors Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers. The standards, which most states have chosen to adopt, seek to raise student achievement and provide more uniform curricula and instruction among states. The Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the standards in July 2010.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 31 Nay 1 (03/18/2015)