

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H. F. 2064

DATE: April 3, 2001

Version: Second Engrossment

Authors: Buesgens and Others

Subject: Establishing a Task Force to Oversee Revisions of the Profile of Learning and Statewide Testing

Analyst: Lisa Larson, 651-296-8036

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

In 1992, the Minnesota Legislature committed itself to establishing a "rigorous, results-oriented" high school graduation rule for the state's public school students. The legislature directed the then-existing state board of education to adopt two types of graduation requirements: the basic standards and the profile of learning. The basic standards are reflected in the basic skills tests, which require skills that most students should be able to master: students must understand math through pre-algebra; read at a degree of difficulty equal to popular adult nonfiction; and write a composition responding to an adult's request for information. The rules for the basic skills tests in reading and math became effective for students entering the ninth grade in the 1996-1997 school year. The rule for the basic skills test in written composition became effective for students entering the tenth grade in the 1997-1998 school year. Students must receive passing scores on the basic skills tests in order to graduate from high school.

The profile of learning requires students to expand their knowledge and skills beyond the state's basic standards, which are also required for graduation. The profile of learning became effective for students entering the ninth grade in the 1998-1999 school year. It contains 56 preparatory content standards and 48 high school content standards divided among 11 learning areas (the legislature adopted the eleventh learning area, technical and vocational education, during the 2000 session and it currently contains no content standards). Until the 2000 legislative session, K-8 students were expected to complete preparatory content standards and high school students were expected to complete 24 content standards in order to graduate.

The 2000 legislature enacted changes to the profile of learning in four areas: local autonomy and state mandates; administering the profile of learning; nomenclature and substance of profile of learning performance requirements; and staff development.

1 Profile of learning task force.

Subd. 1. Establishment; membership. Establishes a task force to oversee a revision of the content standards contained in the profile of learning portion of the state's graduation rule and to develop statewide testing consistent with those revisions. Causes the 10-member task force to be composed of five members appointed by the house speaker and five members appointed by the senate majority leader, all of whom must be appointed by June 15, 2001. Allows up to four task force members to be current legislators, who must be appointed jointly by the house speaker and the senate majority leader. Directs the commissioner to provide the task force with materials and staff.

Subd. 2. Content standards. Directs the commissioner of administration to contract with a widely recognized independent nonprofit having national and international experience, more than 10 years of experience writing standards, and specific knowledge of profile of learning standards to develop academic content standards in English, math, science, history and geography. Makes the task force the primary contact for the contractor.

Subd. 3. Statewide testing. (a) Directs the task force to recommend comprehensive statewide student testing aligned with the revised content standards and at least to consider:

- (1) using a nationally norm-referenced test
- (2) testing students in grades 3 through 9 in reading and math and testing students in grade 10 in reading, math and writing;
- (3) requiring students to pass the tenth grade tests as a condition of graduating from high school; and
- (4) determining the most effective time to administer the tests.

(b) Allows the commissioner of administration, in consultation with the task force, to contract with a test development company. Requires the task force to hold public information meetings throughout the state.

Subd. 4. Recommendations; report. Directs the task force to report to the legislature by January 1, 2002 the recommendations of the contractor for revised content standards and for statewide student testing. Directs the commissioner to use an expedited process to adopt rules to replace the current profile of learning portion of the graduation rule with content standards developed by the contractor and to contract with a test development company if the legislature approves. Requires a public hearing on the proposed rules if 100 or more people request a hearing.

Subd. 5. Expiration. Causes the task force to expire 1/1/02.

Makes this section immediately effective.

2 **Interim applicability of profile of learning requirements.** Prohibits a school district from making profile of learning requirements a condition for high school graduation. Directs a school district to implement the revised profile of learning if the legislature adopts the task force report.

3 **Appropriation.** (a) Appropriates an unspecified sum in fiscal year 2002 from the general fund to the commissioner of children, families and learning for the task force.

(b) Appropriates an unspecified sum in fiscal year 2002 from the general fund to the commissioner of administration for the contractor. Causes any expended amount to cancel.