Overview

Public school students who entered the ninth grade during the 1998-1999 school year are the first group of students required to complete profile of learning requirements in order to graduate from high school. Some people believe that before the state reasonably can expect these students to complete all the graduation requirements under the current rule, it first must analyze and implement the recommendations an independent contractor charged with reviewing the state's standards and assessments and must provide school districts with additional time and needed technological and instructional resources related to implementing the profile of learning. This bill proposes to establish a moratorium on implementing the profile of learning until the commissioner of children, families and learning fully implements a plan based upon the recommendations of an independent contractor and ensures that school districts' technological needs related to profile of learning reporting are met.

1 Moratorium; moratorium repeal. (a) Declares that laws and rules governing the profile of learning do not apply to K-12 students.
   (b) Causes paragraph (a) to remain in effect until (1) the commissioner of children, families and learning certifies to the legislature that the recommendations in the commissioner's plan, which is described in section 2, are fully implemented and school districts' technology needs for reporting are fully met, and (2) a law is enacted specifically repealing paragraph (a).

2 Report; implementation plan; technology needs; certification.

Subd. 1. Report on contractor recommendations; implementation plan. After an external review of both the state's standards, policies and assessments and the department of children, families and learning implementation plan that is consistent with section 3 is conducted, directs the commissioner to analyze the contractor's recommendations and report to the legislature by December 15, 2000. Requires the report to contain the commissioner's analysis of the contractor's recommendations and a plan the commissioner develops for implementing the recommendations the commissioner considers appropriate. Requires the plan to indicate how the
commissioner proposes to alter profile of learning graduation standards to meet the educational needs of all students, including students with specific needs.

**Subd. 2. Technology needs.** Requires the commissioner to work to ensure school districts sufficient ongoing access to computers and needed software at minimum cost, and staff training and support to permit daily classroom record keeping, consistent communications between schools and between school districts, and compatible local and state accountability reporting.

**Subd. 3. Annual reports.** Requires the commissioner annually by December 15 to report to the legislature on the commissioner's progress in implementing the commissioner's plan and meeting districts' technology needs for reporting. Requires the commissioner to present an annual report until the conditions under section 1, paragraph (b) are met.

**Content of external review.** (a) Directs the contractor to examine and report on the quality of the state's standards and assessments as an integrated educational system.

(b) Requires the contractor's report to (1) analyze the link between the state's standards and assessments intended to hold schools accountable for educational achievement, (2) compare and recommend revisions by benchmarking the state's standards and assessments against the best existing models, and (3) diagnose the strengths and weaknesses of the state's academic standards.

(c) Directs the contractor, for benchmarking purposes, to indicate (1) whether the standards, are clear, specific, measurable and easily understood, (2) how the state's English, math, science and social studies standards compare to highly regarded standards, (3) how well state assessments measure important standards, (4) whether state assessments are challenging and set at an appropriate level of difficulty, and (5) how comparable is the state's definition of proficiency in terms of state standards and assessments.

**Grading.** Requires assessment of student achievement under the profile of learning to align with school districts' grading systems and to be included as part of students' letter grade for a subject or course.

**Curriculum; instructional practices for teachers; alternative assessments.** To fully implement standards and assessments, requires school districts to work to improve (1) the scope and sequence of language arts, math, science and social studies curriculum at all levels, (2) research-based instructional skills of teachers and other school staff, and (3) alternative assessments of student achievement.

**Repealer.** Repeals that portion of the profile of learning rule establishing exemplars by which to measure student achievement at the third, fifth, eighth and twelfth grade levels.

**Effective date.** Makes sections 1 to 6 immediately effective.