

AMENDED IN SENATE JULY 2, 2008
AMENDED IN SENATE JUNE 18, 2008
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 23, 2008
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 23, 2008
AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 8, 2008
CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2007—08 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 2895

Introduced by Assembly Member Brownley

February 22, 2008

An act to amend Section 60855 of the Education Code, relating to pupil achievement.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 2895, as amended, Brownley. Pupil achievement: high school exit examination.

Existing law requires each pupil completing grade 12 to successfully pass the high school exit examination as a condition of receiving a diploma of graduation or as a condition of graduation from high school. Existing law requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to contract for an independent evaluation of the exit examination, and requires the evaluation to be based on certain information.

This bill also would include information gathered from statewide pupil identifiers with that ~~information~~.

~~The information.~~ *The bill would require the evaluation to include certain additional information, including, but not limited to, an analysis*

of the economic impact on pupils who do not meet the high school exit examination requirement.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares all of the
2 following:

3 (a) The class of 2006 was the first high school graduating class
4 required to pass the high school exit examination in order to receive
5 a high school diploma.

6 (b) California has spent many millions of dollars on
7 supplemental instruction, intensive remediation programs, and
8 independent evaluation. However, there is no information about
9 what happened to pupils who did not graduate on time, the
10 effectiveness of alternative options to obtain a high school diploma
11 or diploma equivalent, or remediation programs to assist pupils to
12 pass the high school exit examination. It is essential for a
13 determination of the most efficient use of scarce resources to
14 evaluate what happened to pupils in the classes of 2006, 2007, and
15 2008 who did not graduate on time.

16 (c) The State Department of Education reported a graduation
17 rate of 67.1 percent for the class of 2006. Research concludes that
18 is the lowest graduation rate of any class since 1997.

19 (d) The consequences for pupils who drop out of high school
20 include lesser earnings, more health problems, a greater likelihood
21 of being unemployed, and a greater reliance on government
22 assistance.

23 (e) The rising demand for highly educated workers in California
24 requires that more pupils graduate from high school and attain
25 postsecondary education and training.

26 (f) California’s independent evaluator of the high school exit
27 examination found that little is known specifically about class of
28 2006 members who did not graduate in June of 2006.

29 (g) The independent evaluator recommended:

30 (1) Tracking pupils who do not graduate on time.

31 (2) Investigating the factors that make the high school exit
32 examination a more difficult graduation requirement for some
33 groups of disadvantaged pupils by:

1 (A) Studying the reasons for low performance in schools with
2 higher densities of minorities and pupils from low-income families.

3 (B) Analyzing, using pupil identifiers, pupil progress at earlier
4 grades as measured by scores on the California Standards Tests,
5 and for English language learners, the California English Language
6 Development Test, to see where and when pupils begin to ~~get off~~
7 *track fall behind grade level.*

8 SEC. 2. Section 60855 of the Education Code is amended to
9 read:

10 60855. (a) By January 15, 2000, the Superintendent shall
11 contract for a multiyear independent evaluation of the high school
12 exit examination that is established pursuant to this chapter. The
13 evaluation shall be based upon information gathered in field testing,
14 annual administrations of the examination, surveys, and statewide
15 pupil identifiers, and shall include all of the following:

16 (1) Analysis of pupil performance, broken down by grade level,
17 gender, race or ethnicity, and subject matter of the examination,
18 including any trends that become apparent over time.

19 (2) Analysis of the effects of the exit examination, if any, on
20 college attendance, pupil retention, graduation, and dropout rates,
21 including analysis of these effects on the population subgroups
22 described in subdivision (b). This analysis shall include:

23 (A) To the extent that existing data is available or may be
24 obtained by the independent evaluator, a determination of the
25 pathways that pupils who do not meet the high school exit
26 examination graduation requirement pursue.

27 (B) The number of pupils who do not graduate on time who
28 participated in and obtained a diploma or diploma equivalent
29 through the following 10 options specified by the Superintendent:

30 (i) Remedial supplemental instruction program.

31 (ii) Fifth year of high school.

32 (iii) Independent study program.

33 (iv) Charter school.

34 (v) Adult school.

35 (vi) Community college program leading to a high school
36 diploma.

37 (vii) County court or community school program.

38 (viii) California High School Proficiency Exam.

39 (ix) General Education Development (GED) test.

1 (x) Options available to pupils pursuant to Chapter 526 of the
2 Statutes of 2007, *including the following information specifically*
3 *for pupils with individual education plans as required by the*
4 *federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Sec.*
5 *1400), Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29*
6 *U.S.C. Sec. 794), or English learners:*

7 (I) *The length of time the pupil pursued the option.*

8 (II) *The type of educational setting, such as regular public*
9 *school or adult education, in which the pupil pursued the option.*

10 (III) *Whether the pupil passed the high school exit examination*
11 *subsequent to pursuing the option.*

12 (C) Analysis of the economic impact on pupils who do not meet
13 the high school exit examination graduation requirement.

14 (3) Analysis of whether the exit examination is likely to have,
15 or has, differential effects, whether beneficial or detrimental, on
16 population subgroups described in subdivision (b), including:

17 (A) Whether pupils who failed the high school exit examination
18 also failed to meet other graduation requirements.

19 (B) Whether pupils who failed the high school exit examination
20 attend secondary schools with the following characteristics:

21 (i) Rank in deciles 1 to 3, inclusive, of the Academic
22 Performance Index.

23 (ii) Employ a high percentage of underprepared teachers.

24 (iii) Have 25 percent or more of the school population classified
25 as any one or more of the following:

26 (I) A category of children described in Title I of the federal No
27 Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (20 U.S.C. Sec. 6333(c)(1)(A) and

28 (B)).

29 (II) English learner.

30 (III) Ethnic minority.

31 (b) In analyzing the characteristics of schools attended by pupils
32 who fail to meet the high school exit examination requirement,
33 the independent evaluator shall analyze and report on information
34 from the following reports:

35 (1) The report required pursuant to subdivision (c) of Section
36 1240.

37 (2) The report required pursuant to Section 33126, for the
38 purpose of reviewing actual school-level unrestricted per pupil
39 expenditures and actual school-level average teacher salaries that
40 meet or exceed school district or state averages.

1 (c) Evaluations conducted pursuant to this section separately
2 shall consider test results for each of the following population
3 subgroups, provided that information concerning individuals shall
4 not be gathered or disclosed in the process of preparing this
5 evaluation.

6 (1) English language learners and non-English language learners.

7 (2) Individuals with exceptional needs and individuals without
8 exceptional needs.

9 (3) Pupils who qualify for free or reduced-price meals and are
10 enrolled in schools that qualify for assistance under Title 1 of the
11 federal Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law
12 103-382) and pupils who do not qualify for free or reduced-price
13 meals and are not enrolled in schools that qualify for assistance
14 under Title 1 of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

15 (4) Any group of pupils that has been determined by the
16 independent evaluator to be affected differentially by the exit
17 examination established pursuant to this chapter, including racial
18 and ethnic subgroups.

19 (d) Using pupil identifiers, evaluations shall include analysis
20 of pupil progress at earlier grades as measured by scores on the
21 California Standards Test and, for English language learners, the
22 California English Language Development Test, to determine
23 where and when pupils who failed the high school exit examination
24 begin to ~~get off track~~ *fall behind grade level* in developing the
25 skills necessary to ~~be successful~~ *pass the high school exit*
26 *examination*.

27 (e) Evaluation reports shall include recommendations to improve
28 the quality, fairness, validity, and reliability of the examination.
29 The independent evaluator also may make recommendations for
30 revisions in design, administration, scoring, processing, or use of
31 the examination, and to increase graduation rates for all pupils in
32 California.

33 (f) The independent evaluator shall report to the Governor, the
34 Legislative Analyst's Office, the Superintendent, the state board,
35 the Secretary for Education, and the chairpersons of the education
36 policy committees in both houses of the Legislature, in accordance
37 with the following schedule:

38 (1) Preliminary report on field testing by July 1, 2000.

39 (2) First annual report by February 1, 2002.

- 1 (3) Regular biennial reports by February 1 of even-numbered
- 2 years following 2002.

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