

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 6, 2009

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 22, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

**ASSEMBLY BILL**

**No. 554**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member Furutani**

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Eng, Garrick, Solorio, and Torlakson)*

February 25, 2009

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An act to amend Section 51225.3 of the Education Code, relating to graduation requirements.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 554, as amended, Furutani. Graduation requirements.

Existing law prohibits a pupil from receiving a diploma of graduation from high school unless he or she completes specified requirements, including, but not limited to, completing one course in visual or performing arts or foreign language.

This bill would require that a pupil take at least 2 courses from the subject areas of visual or performing arts, foreign language, or career technical education, as defined, ~~rather than on~~ *provided that at least one of these courses is a course in either visual or performing arts or foreign language.* The bill would require schools, to the extent practicable, to offer courses within their existing school calendars. Because the bill would require schools to provide a higher level of service, it would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to these statutory provisions.

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

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

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

3 (1) The foundational principle of the Education Code is that all  
4 pupils should have access to equitable educational opportunities  
5 and resources.

6 (2) The future of the state is dependent upon minimizing, if not  
7 entirely eliminating, the inequities in our public schools so that all  
8 pupils will have more equitable opportunities to learn skills needed  
9 for entry into the workforce, to pursue postsecondary educational  
10 goals, and to contribute to the social cohesion of the state.

11 (3) Current law specifies the courses a pupil must take in order  
12 to graduate from high school. However, too many pupils are  
13 dropping out of high school or graduating without the necessary  
14 foundation to succeed in the workplace or in postsecondary  
15 education.

16 (b) It is therefore, the intent of the Legislature that by specifying  
17 the types of coursework that pupils must complete in order to  
18 graduate, pupils will have world class skills and the workforce of  
19 the state will be competitive in the global economy.

20 (c) It is also the intent of the Legislature that pupils be prepared  
21 to meet the academic and technical skills challenges of the high  
22 school curriculum and that they take advantage of the range of  
23 course options available to them.

24 (d) It is further the intent of the Legislature that in order to  
25 increase the rigor of the coursework and to ensure that pupils are  
26 prepared to meet the demands of the 21st century, the courses  
27 required for high school graduation be aligned with standards and  
28 frameworks that are adopted by the State Board of Education.

29 SEC. 2. Section 51225.3 of the Education Code is amended to  
30 read:

1 51225.3. (a) Commencing with the 1988–89 school year, no  
2 pupil shall receive a diploma of graduation from high school who,  
3 while in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, has not completed all of the  
4 following:

5 (1) At least the following numbers of courses in the subjects  
6 specified, each course having a duration of one year, unless  
7 otherwise specified.

8 (A) Three courses in English.

9 (B) Two courses in mathematics.

10 (C) Two courses in science, including biological and physical  
11 sciences.

12 (D) Three courses in social studies, including United States  
13 history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a  
14 one-semester course in American government and civics, and a  
15 one-semester course in economics.

16 ~~(E) Two courses from any of the following three subject areas:~~

17 *(E) Two courses from the following three subject areas, provided*  
18 *that at least one of the two courses is a course specified in clause*  
19 *(i) or (ii) of this subparagraph:*

20 (i) Visual or performing arts.

21 (ii) Foreign Language. For the purposes of satisfying the  
22 requirement specified in this subparagraph, a course in American  
23 Sign Language shall be deemed a course in foreign language.

24 (iii) Career technical education.

25 (F) For the purposes of satisfying the requirements of  
26 subparagraph (E), the following shall apply:

27 (i) Schools, to the extent practicable, shall offer courses within  
28 their existing school calendars.

29 (ii) “Career technical education course” means a course in a  
30 district-operated career technical education program that is aligned  
31 to the career technical education model curriculum standards and  
32 framework adopted by the state board.

33 (G) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has  
34 been exempted pursuant to the provisions of this code.

35 (2) Other coursework as the governing board of the school  
36 district may by rule specify.

37 (b) The governing board, with the active involvement of parents,  
38 administrators, teachers, and pupils, shall adopt alternative means  
39 for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study which may  
40 include practical demonstration of skills and competencies,

1 supervised work experience or other outside school experience,  
2 career technical education classes offered in high schools, courses  
3 offered by regional occupational centers or programs,  
4 interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a  
5 postsecondary institution. Requirements for graduation and  
6 specified alternative modes for completing the prescribed course  
7 of study shall be made available to pupils, parents, and the public.  
8 SEC. 3. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that  
9 this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to  
10 local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made  
11 pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division  
12 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.

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