

Senate Bill No. 1354

CHAPTER 1024

An act to add Section 51224.5 to the Education Code, relating to algebra.

[Approved by Governor September 30, 2000. Filed
with Secretary of State September 30, 2000.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1354, Poochigian. Algebra instruction.

Under existing law, the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, is required to offer courses in specified areas of study, including mathematics. Existing law also specifies that graduation from high school requires, among other things, completion of 2 courses in mathematics.

This bill would specify that the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, include, as part of mathematics instruction, algebra. The bill would also specify that commencing with the 2003–04 school year, for high school graduation, at least one or a combination of the 2 required mathematics courses meet or exceed the rigor of content standards for Algebra I that are adopted by the State Board of Education. The requirements on school districts to ensure that the additional course of study requirements are carried out would impose a state-mandated local program. The bill would express legislative intent that any modification to coursework required by the bill shall result in neither additional classes nor additional costs.

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, including the creation of a State Mandates Claims Fund to pay the costs of mandates that do not exceed \$1,000,000 statewide and other procedures for claims whose statewide costs exceed \$1,000,000.

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.

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

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



(a) Too many of California's high school graduates are graduating without the necessary mathematical foundation to succeed in the workforce and in postsecondary education.

(b) Research and findings demonstrate the importance of algebra as a building block for advanced mathematics, a predictor of success in college, and as a key ingredient for everyday problem solving.

(c) Based upon the direction of the Governor in November of 1999, the State Board of Education, the Secretary for Education, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the content standards of Algebra I as adopted by the State Board of Education will be included in the 2003–04 high school exit examination.

(d) If pupils are expected to be successful on the high school exit examination, they must be given a reasonable opportunity to learn the subjects upon which they will be tested, especially because a pupil's graduation from high school is contingent upon passing the examination. This standard has been affirmed in federal case law as a threshold requirement for a high stakes examination like the high school exit examination. In the case of *Debra P. v. Turlington* (M.D.Fla. 1984) 546 F.Supp. 177, 186, *aff'd*, (11th Cir. 1984) 730 F.2d 1405, the district court stated that a competency exam was instructionally valid because "students are afforded an adequate opportunity to learn the skill tested...."

(e) By requiring that a course in Algebra I that meets or exceeds the state content standards be included in the adopted course of study and taken by every high school pupil as a requirement of graduation, the state can ensure that high school pupils are given the opportunity to learn as required by law.

(f) An understanding of algebra will provide the mathematical foundation necessary to pass the high school exit examination and succeed in both the workforce and in postsecondary education.

SEC. 2. Section 51224.5 is added to the Education Code, to read:

51224.5. (a) The adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall include algebra as part of the mathematics area of study pursuant to subdivision (f) of Section 51220.

(b) Commencing with the 2003–04 school year and each year thereafter, at least one course, or a combination of the two courses in mathematics required to be completed pursuant to subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 51225.3 by pupils while in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, prior to receiving a diploma of graduation from high school, shall meet or exceed the rigor of the content standards for Algebra I, as adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Section 60605.

(c) If at any time, in any of grades 7 to 12, inclusive, or in any combination of those grades, a pupil completes coursework that meets or exceeds the academic content standards for Algebra I pursuant to subdivision (b) in less than two courses, subparagraph (B) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 51225.3 shall be



deemed to have been satisfied and the pupil shall not be required to take additional coursework in mathematics.

SEC. 3. It is the intent of the Legislature that any modification to coursework required by this act shall result in neither additional classes nor in additional costs, but that any modification to coursework shall be incorporated into the requirements of paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 51225.3 of the Education Code.

SEC. 4. Notwithstanding Section 17610 of the Government Code, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code. If the statewide cost of the claim for reimbursement does not exceed one million dollars (\$1,000,000), reimbursement shall be made from the State Mandates Claims Fund.

