

HOUSE BILL 279

56TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2023

INTRODUCED BY

Cathrynn N. Brown and Gay G. Kernan and Michael Padilla
and Jenifer Jones and Crystal R. Diamond

AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC EDUCATION; AMENDING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS;
REQUIRING ONE-HALF UNIT OF PERSONAL FINANCE PRIOR TO HIGH
SCHOOL GRADUATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986,
Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-13-1.1. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.--

A. At the end of grades eight through eleven, each
student shall prepare an interim next-step plan that sets forth
the coursework for the grades remaining until high school
graduation. Each year's plan shall explain any differences
from previous interim next-step plans, shall be filed with the
principal of the student's high school and shall be signed by
the student, the student's parent and the student's guidance

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1 counselor or other school official charged with coursework
2 planning for the student.

3 B. Each student must complete a final next-step
4 plan during the senior year and prior to graduation. The plan
5 shall be filed with the principal of the student's high school
6 and shall be signed by the student, the student's parent and
7 the student's guidance counselor or other school official
8 charged with coursework planning for the student.

9 C. An individualized education program that meets
10 the requirements of Subsections A and B of this section and
11 that meets all applicable transition and procedural
12 requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities
13 Education Act for a student with a disability shall satisfy the
14 next-step plan requirements of this section for that student.

15 D. A local school board shall ensure that each high
16 school student has the opportunity to develop a next-step plan
17 based on reports of college and workplace readiness
18 assessments, as available, and other factors and is reasonably
19 informed about:

20 (1) curricular and course options, including
21 honors or advanced placement courses, dual-credit courses,
22 distance learning courses, career clusters and career pathways,
23 pre-apprenticeship programs or remediation programs that the
24 college and workplace readiness assessments indicate to be
25 appropriate;

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1 (2) opportunities available that lead to
2 different post-high-school options; and

3 (3) alternative opportunities available if the
4 student does not finish a planned curriculum.

5 E. The secretary shall:

6 (1) establish specific accountability
7 standards for administrators, counselors, teachers and school
8 district staff to ensure that every student has the opportunity
9 to develop a next-step plan;

10 (2) promulgate rules for accredited private
11 schools in order to ensure substantial compliance with the
12 provisions of this section;

13 (3) monitor compliance with the requirements
14 of this section; and

15 (4) compile such information as is necessary
16 to evaluate the success of next-step plans and report annually,
17 by December 15, to the legislative education study committee
18 and the governor.

19 F. Once a student has entered ninth grade, the
20 graduation requirements shall not be changed for that student
21 from the requirements specified in the law at the time the
22 student entered ninth grade.

23 G. Successful completion of a minimum of twenty-
24 three units aligned to the state academic content and
25 performance standards shall be required for graduation. These

1 units shall be as follows:

2 (1) four units in English, with major emphasis
3 on grammar and literature;

4 (2) three units in mathematics, at least one
5 of which is equivalent to the algebra 1 level or higher;

6 (3) two units in science, one of which shall
7 have a laboratory component; provided, however, that with
8 students entering the ninth grade beginning in the 2005-2006
9 school year, three units in science shall be required, one of
10 which shall have a laboratory component;

11 (4) three units in social science, which shall
12 include United States history and geography, world history and
13 geography and government and economics;

14 (5) one unit in physical education;

15 (6) one unit in communication skills or
16 business education, with a major emphasis on writing and
17 speaking and that may include a language other than English;

18 (7) one-half unit in New Mexico history for
19 students entering the ninth grade beginning in the 2005-2006
20 school year; and

21 (8) nine elective units and seven and one-half
22 elective units for students entering the ninth grade in the
23 2005-2006 school year that meet department content and
24 performance standards. Student service learning shall be
25 offered as an elective. Financial literacy shall be offered as

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1 an elective. Pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as
2 electives. Media literacy may be offered as an elective.

3 H. For students entering the ninth grade beginning
4 in the 2009-2010 school year, at least one of the units
5 required for graduation shall be earned as an advanced
6 placement or honors course, a dual-credit course offered in
7 cooperation with an institution of higher education or a
8 distance learning course.

9 I. The department shall establish a procedure for
10 students to be awarded credit through completion of specified
11 career technical education courses for certain graduation
12 requirements, and districts may choose to allow students who
13 successfully complete an industry-recognized credential,
14 certificate or degree to receive additional weight in the
15 calculation of the student's grade point average.

16 J. Successful completion of the requirements of the
17 New Mexico diploma of excellence shall be required for
18 graduation for students entering the ninth grade beginning in
19 the 2009-2010 school year. Successful completion of a minimum
20 of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic content and
21 performance standards shall be required to earn a New Mexico
22 diploma of excellence. These units shall be as follows:

23 (1) four units in English, with major emphasis
24 on grammar, nonfiction writing and literature; provided that
25 department-approved work-based training or career and technical

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1 education courses that meet state English academic content
2 performance standards shall qualify as one of the four required
3 English units;

4 (2) four units in mathematics, of which one
5 shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of algebra
6 2, unless the parent has submitted written, signed permission
7 for the student to complete a lesser mathematics unit; and
8 provided that a financial literacy course or department-
9 approved work-based training or career and technical education
10 course that meets state mathematics academic content and
11 performance standards shall qualify as one of the four required
12 mathematics units;

13 (3) three units in science, two of which shall
14 have a laboratory component; provided that department-approved
15 work-based training or career and technical education courses
16 that meet state science academic content and performance
17 standards shall qualify as one of the three required science
18 units;

19 (4) three and one-half units in social
20 science, which shall include United States history and
21 geography, world history and geography, government and
22 economics and one-half unit of New Mexico history;

23 (5) for students who enter the ninth grade in
24 the 2023-2024 school year and subsequent school years, one-half
25 unit in personal finance;

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1 [~~(5)~~] (6) one unit in physical education, as
2 determined by each school district, which may include a
3 physical education program that meets state content and
4 performance standards or participation in marching band, junior
5 reserve officers' training corps or interscholastic sports
6 sanctioned by the New Mexico activities association or any
7 other co-curricular physical activity;

8 [~~(6)~~] (7) one unit in one of the following: a
9 career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language other
10 than English; and

11 [~~(7)~~] (8) seven and one-half elective units
12 that meet department content and performance standards. Career
13 and technical education courses shall be offered as an
14 elective. Student service learning shall be offered as an
15 elective. [~~Financial literacy shall be offered as an~~
16 ~~elective.~~] Pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as
17 electives. Media literacy may be offered as an elective. For
18 students entering the ninth grade in the 2023-2024 school year
19 and subsequent school years, elective units shall total seven.

20 K. For students entering the eighth grade in the
21 2012-2013 school year, a course in health education is required
22 prior to graduation. Health education may be required in
23 either middle school or high school, as determined by the
24 school district. Each school district shall submit to the
25 department by the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year a

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1 health education implementation plan for the 2012-2013 and
2 subsequent school years, including in which grade health
3 education will be required and how the course aligns with
4 department content and performance standards. Health education
5 courses shall include:

6 (1) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault
7 awareness and prevention training that meets department
8 standards developed in consultation with the federal centers
9 for disease control and prevention that are based on evidence-
10 based methods that have proven to be effective; and

11 (2) lifesaving skills training that follows
12 nationally recognized guidelines for hands-on psychomotor
13 skills cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Students shall
14 be trained to recognize the signs of a heart attack, use an
15 automated external defibrillator and perform the Heimlich
16 maneuver for choking victims. The secretary shall promulgate
17 rules to provide for the:

18 (a) use of the following instructors for
19 the training provided pursuant to this paragraph: 1) school
20 nurses, health teachers and athletic department personnel as
21 instructors; and 2) any qualified persons volunteering to
22 provide training at no cost to the school district that the
23 school district determines to be eligible to offer instruction
24 pursuant to this paragraph; and

25 (b) approval of training and

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1 instructional materials related to the training established
2 pursuant to this paragraph in both English and Spanish.

3 L. For students entering the ninth grade in the
4 2017-2018 school year and subsequent school years:

5 (1) one of the units in mathematics required
6 by Paragraph (2) of Subsection J of this section may comprise a
7 computer science course if taken after the student demonstrates
8 competence in mathematics and if the course is not used to
9 satisfy any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph (3)
10 of that subsection; and

11 (2) one of the units in science required by
12 Paragraph (3) of Subsection J of this section may comprise a
13 computer science course if taken after the student demonstrates
14 competence in science and if the course is not used to satisfy
15 any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph (2) of that
16 subsection.

17 M. Final examinations shall be administered to all
18 students in all classes offered for credit.

19 N. Until July 1, 2010, a student who has not passed
20 a state graduation examination in the subject areas of reading,
21 English, mathematics, writing, science and social science shall
22 not receive a high school diploma. The state graduation
23 examination on social science shall include a section on the
24 constitution of the United States and the constitution of New
25 Mexico. If a student exits from the school system at the end

1 of grade twelve without having passed a state graduation
2 examination, the student shall receive an appropriate state
3 certificate indicating the number of credits earned and the
4 grade completed. If within five years after a student exits
5 from the school system the student takes and passes the state
6 graduation examination, the student may receive a high school
7 diploma. Any student passing the state graduation examination
8 and completing all other requirements within five years of
9 entering ninth grade, including a final summer session if
10 completed by August 1, may be counted by the school system in
11 which the student is enrolled as a high school graduate for the
12 year in which completion and examination occur.

13 O. Beginning with the 2010-2011 school year, a
14 student shall not receive a New Mexico diploma of excellence if
15 the student has not demonstrated competence in the subject
16 areas of mathematics, reading and language arts, writing,
17 social studies and science, including a section on the
18 constitution of the United States and the constitution of New
19 Mexico, based on a standards-based assessment or assessments or
20 a portfolio of standards-based indicators established by the
21 department by rule. The standards-based assessments required
22 in Section 22-2C-4 NMSA 1978 may also serve as the assessment
23 required for high school graduation. If a student exits from
24 the school system at the end of grade twelve without having
25 satisfied the requirements of this subsection, the student

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1 shall receive an appropriate state certificate indicating the
2 number of credits earned and the grade completed. If within
3 five years after a student exits from the school system the
4 student satisfies the requirements of this subsection, the
5 student may receive a New Mexico diploma of excellence. Any
6 student satisfying the requirements of this subsection and
7 completing all other requirements within five years of entering
8 ninth grade, including a final summer session if completed by
9 August 1, may be counted by the school system in which the
10 student is enrolled as a high school graduate for the year in
11 which all requirements are satisfied.

12 P. As used in this section:

13 (1) "career and technical education",
14 sometimes referred to as "vocational education", means
15 organized programs offering a sequence of courses, including
16 technical education and applied technology education, that are
17 directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or
18 unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations requiring
19 an industry-recognized credential, certificate or degree;

20 (2) "career and technical education course"
21 means a course with content that provides technical knowledge,
22 skills and competency-based applied learning and that aligns
23 with educational standards and expectations as defined in rule;

24 (3) "career cluster" means a grouping of
25 occupations in industry sectors based on recognized

1 commonalities that provide an organizing tool for developing
2 instruction within the educational system;

3 (4) "career pathways" means a sub-grouping
4 used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and
5 instruction of occupations and career specialities that share a
6 set of common knowledge and skills for career success;

7 (5) "final next-step plan" means a next-step
8 plan that shows that the student has committed or intends to
9 commit in the near future to a four-year college or university,
10 a two-year college, a trade or vocational program, an
11 internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job;

12 (6) "interim next-step plan" means an annual
13 next-step plan in which the student specifies post-high-school
14 goals and sets forth the coursework that will allow the student
15 to achieve those goals; and

16 (7) "next-step plan" means an annual personal
17 written plan of studies developed by a student in a public
18 school or other state-supported school or institution in
19 consultation with the student's parent and school counselor or
20 other school official charged with coursework planning for the
21 student that includes one or more of the following:

22 (a) advanced placement or honors
23 courses;

24 (b) dual-credit courses offered in
25 cooperation with an institution of higher education;

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- (c) distance learning courses;
- (d) career-technical courses; and
- (e) pre-apprenticeship programs.

Q. The secretary may establish a policy to provide for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and testing provisions of the Public School Code."

SECTION 2. APPLICABILITY.--The provisions of this act apply to the 2023-2024 school year and subsequent school years.