

SENATE BILL 1307

By Pody

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1; Title 49, Chapter 2; Title 49, Chapter 3 and Title 49, Chapter 6, relative to testing.

WHEREAS, the Every Student Succeeds Act permits local education agencies to administer a locally selected assessment in lieu of the state-designated assessment so long as the locally selected assessment is a nationally recognized assessment that has been approved by the state; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program is designed to assess true student understanding, not just basic memorization and test-taking skills; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program is designed to assess what students know and what can be done to help them succeed; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program has been plagued by issues that have resulted in assessment results being inconsistent and invalid; and

WHEREAS, the ACT is a nationally recognized high school assessment that has been approved for use by the state; and

WHEREAS, the ACT provides consistent and valid assessment results that measure true student understanding in furtherance of the goal of the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program; and

WHEREAS, utilizing the ACT will provide schools with the ability to compare the growth and achievement of high school students from year to year; and

WHEREAS, ACT assessment results will provide invaluable information for teachers regarding what can be done to help every student succeed; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire offers a system of aligned summative assessments that can be implemented at a state, district, or school level; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire provides classrooms, districts, and states aggregate growth statistics to measure how much growth occurred in each growth category; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire data may be used as an indicator for program effectiveness; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire provides a standards-based system of assessments to monitor progress toward college and career readiness for grades three through early high school; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire and the ACT measure student development of knowledge and skills in English language arts, mathematics, reading, science, and writing for grades three through twelve; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee is committed to maintaining student achievement and growth at the highest level possible; and

WHEREAS, ACT Aspire and the ACT will be appropriate and reliable methods of assessment for students; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 60, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

(a) In lieu of the state-mandated assessments required as part of the Tennessee comprehensive assessment program, an LEA may choose to administer the ACT or ACT Aspire suites of assessments as an approved testing alternative for students in grades nine through twelve (9-12). An LEA's administration of the ACT or ACT Aspire suites of assessments for students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) does not excuse public school students from taking the examination required at grade eleven (11) pursuant to § 49-6-6001.

(b) Before using an approved testing alternative, an LEA shall notify the department of education, in writing, that the LEA intends to use an approved testing alternative.

(c) An LEA using an approved testing alternative shall notify the parents or guardians of all students in grades nine through twelve (9-12), in writing, that the LEA is using an approved testing alternative, and provide the parents or guardians with a copy of the notice sent to the department of education pursuant to subsection (b).

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2019, the public welfare requiring it.