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SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

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House Bill 5228 (Substitute S-6 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)

Sponsor: Representative Sharon Gire

House Committee: Education

Senate Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to require the board of a school district or public school academy to administer to high school students State assessments in communication skills, mathematics, science, and, beginning with students scheduled to graduate in 2000, social studies. (The bill would delete the current requirement that a school board award State-endorsed high school diplomas to graduates who demonstrated the required proficiency in those subject areas.) A school board would have to include on a pupil's high school transcript his or her scaled score on the assessment; an indication that the pupil had achieved State endorsement for a subject area, if the pupil's scaled score fell within the required range; and the number of days the pupil attended school each year during high school and the total number of days school was in session each year. A nonpublic school student and a home school student also could take an assessment, and a school district would have to administer an assessment for a home school student.

The assessments would have to be administered during the last 30 school days of grade 11, and scores would have to be returned by the beginning of a pupil's first semester of grade 12. Returned scores would have to indicate a pupil's scaled score for each subject area, a range of scaled scores needed for each subject area, and the range of scaled scores required for each category. The Department of Education would have to develop scaled scores for reporting assessment results, subject to State Board approval. The Superintendent of Public Instruction would have to establish three categories for each subject area indicating basic competency, above average, and outstanding. The Department would have to design and distribute to schools a document describing these categories and indicating the scaled score ranges for each category in each subject area.

A pupil who wanted to repeat an assessment could do so, without charge, in the next school year or after graduation. A person who graduated from high school after 1996 and who previously had not taken any assessments also could take the tests at no cost and have his or her score included on a transcript. Pupils scheduled to graduate in 1998 and who took the assessments during the 1996-97 school year could repeat an assessment during the 1997-98 school year and before graduation.

The bill also would require the Department of Education to: ensure that the length of the assessments and the time needed to administer them were the shortest possible, and that the maximum time needed to complete all assessments not exceed eight hours; arrange for repeat assessments throughout the year for individuals who wanted to repeat an assessment; and submit to the Legislature annually until 2000 a comprehensive report on the status of the assessment program. Not more than 90 days after the bill took effect the State Board of Education would have to appoint an 11-member assessment administration advisory committee.

The bill is tie-barred to House Bills 5229, 5230, 5232, 5234, and 5235.

MCL 380.1279 et al.

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

FISCAL IMPACT

Changes in the assessment process could result in an indeterminate increase in costs at the State and local levels. At the State level, there could be increased costs associated with the following requirements: the Department's development of a scaled scoring system, a faster turn-around time of the scores, ensuring that the length of the tests did not exceed eight hours, establishing and arranging the retesting periods (particularly for those students who took the test in 1996-97 and chose to retake the test in 1997-98), the submission of a comprehensive report to the Legislature detailing the status of the State assessment program, and the creation of an 11-member assessment administration advisory committee to advise the State Board, as well as a possible increase in participation in dual enrollment programs. The costs of these increased requirements are indeterminable because it is unknown whether the current funding of more than \$1,300,000 would be sufficient to cover these costs.

Local districts also could incur a cost for re-evaluating students to determine if they were ready to take the assessment tests. This cost would have to be paid from a school's general operating fund, which may or may not be sufficient depending on the school district.

Date Completed: 12-3-97

Fiscal Analyst: J. Carrasco