

MICROFILM DIVIDER

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ROLL NUMBER

DESCRIPTION

2309

2007 SENATE EDUCATION

SB 2309

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: January 29, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 2136, 2210, 2212

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

Chairman Freborg opened the hearing on SB 2309, a bill relating to high school coursework requirements, relating to high school graduation requirements and student proficiency. All members were present.

Senator Nething introduced the bill. During the interim he attended meetings related to higher education and the one constant message that was coming through is that nationwide we have 50% of the students that enter college need remedial education, primarily in the fields of science and math. In North Dakota it is only 34%. That is still too high and he wants to help change that. He visited with the higher education folks from the P16 study and asked the legislative council to put together a bill that would help match up the concerns of the P16 commission with his concerns about remedial education that we have to provide in higher education for college freshman. The result is SB 2309. He went through the bill (meter 3:49) We take a lot of criticism of not funding 70% of what school districts want to spend. This penalizes the efficient school district. If we could measure the cost of a curriculum like this and fund 70% of it we would alleviate some of those concerns. Those school districts that want to add on could do so, it would still be a local decision.

Senator Flakoll asked on page 2 the requirements to enter into higher education in the state, will that hamper out of state students coming into the state?

Senator Nething said they may have to take remedial education to match it.

Senator Flakoll said the bill says they can't be admitted.

Senator Nething said he did not even want to deal with out of state students, we control our own admission standards. He doesn't know if this would impact them in that context or not.

Greg Gallagher, Director of Standards and Achievement, Department of Public Instruction, presented testimony for Gary Gronberg, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction and testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

Senator Flakoll asked how many people he envisions putting on the committee.

Greg Gallagher said it would not be as big as the P16 commission which had 40 members.

This one could be smaller, there would be more detailed discussion and the prospect of other sub group work that would be involved.

Senator Flakoll asked if we would be looking at more than \$1000 per person per meeting?

Greg Gallagher said in the estimation of the fiscal note, the intent was to approximate the amount that was invested during the P16, spread out over two years. Perhaps a meeting every two months involving a core group or additional sub group activity. The best interests of the departments fiscal note was to be as anchored as possible in the P16 original work.

Senator Bakke asked for the cost of the bill without the amendment, the cost for curriculum , staff, for all those things school districts would have to take on?

Greg Gallagher said that would be dependent on the efforts of the alignment committee if we move forward with it over the next biennium. We would be premature to put together a fiscal note of the impact to school districts and higher education. The department put together a fiscal note to earmark it for the purposes of the alignment committee study not the total affect

across the system. The key decision point is if we raise the number of units, that could have minimal impact across the state. If you start to talk about a proficiency bases assessment system, that would have an entirely different impact to the state.

Senator Flakoll said they can't run it? They can't project it? He is only interested in the bill, he is not interested in the amendments.

Greg Gallagher said in Department of Public Instruction's interpretation, what was being proposed was requiring students to take certain courses. The impact on that would vary greatly, they would have to study that further to know what it would cost. They were not in a good position to be able to anticipate that cost.

Senator Flakoll said you are saying you don't know how many schools aren't offering that curriculum.

Greg Gallagher said given the nature of sections 2 and 3, they would have to do a much more thorough audit of what the current standing of students' participation in those courses would be.

Senator Gary Lee asked if the alignment committee, at least the board level people, don't they meet as a joint board periodically? Couldn't this be taken on as an agenda item?

Greg Gallagher said they are required to meet annually. This activity would be much more resource intensive, much like P16.

Senator Gary Lee said if the amendments were included, you indicated we could still match the time table. It seems like it is more extensive and might be difficult to put into the time table.

Greg Gallagher said they believe it's plausible for the commission to proceed over the biennium. The key issue is what is the focal point of the system's growth. Is it for the continuation of seat time standards or towards proficiency standards. The P16 states rather

clearly the biggest challenge to the state is to advance an achievement based system not one based on seat time.

Mike Hillman, Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, North Dakota University System, testified in favor of the bill. He supports the bill as it supports the P16 recommendations. He distributed the P16 Task Force Report. Every constituency was at the table- Career and Technology Education, teachers, private sector employers, they worked very long and very hard to develop unanimous consent for these recommendations. Page 11 provides the exact wording in terms of the curricular requirements that are being recommended. Systemic change is difficult. It would be easy to students, schools, individuals to be left out of the process, we need to be careful of how we do the transition. Some research presented to the task force indicates seat time is not disconnected from proficiencies. The number one strategy was to increase the curricular requirements of students and then to move towards proficiencies. Rather than throwing out all of section 3, he would suggest it be reworded to reflect the very carefully considered recommendations from the task force. Those recommendations are reflected in years, not units. These requirements should not be looked upon as something to get out of the way. We have students with the current three years of math requirements who have completed it in grade 10 so they go two years of high school without any math and they are not ready for college. He recommends a combined approach. He is available for help with wording.

Senator Taylor asked if the University System know the number of freshmen students that need remedial help.

Dr. Hillman said a conservative estimate of 23 – 27% need remedial work.

Senator Taylor asked what subjects?

Dr. Hillman said math and English/language arts (reading).

Senator Flakoll asked how North Dakota compared to other states in the need for remedial work.

Dr. Hillman said this is what we hope to get out of the new administrative system you have heard so much about. They did hand calculate this sort of thing a few years ago, they did not see much difference between North Dakota and other states.

Senator Flakoll asked about providing the school districts with that kind of feed back.

Dr. Hillman said excellent question. The two pivotal issues related to systemic improvement are linked to the data system and the alignment of expectations. Aligning high school graduation with college entrance is one but the data sharing is also important. They are involved with HB 1027 and with the governor's office and other agencies, they are hoping to get North Dakota started on a longitudinal data system. It would follow a student from pre school through graduate school so they can provide feedback for the purposes of managing the system. That is not in place. They struggle to get information back to high schools. They contracted with ACT about 4 years ago to provide a feedback report to high schools that listed a student's high school GPA, ACT score and college GPA after one year in the University System. They got very little feedback from the high schools. They did not think it was worth their investment.

Senator Gary Lee said section 3 compared to the first strategy, is the difference just in the dates of implementation?

Dr. Hillman said there is also a difference in units vs. years and the additional requirements in the bill, beyond the task force recommendations. He thinks we need to end up where the recommendations in the bill are but we need to bring everyone along. If we go too quickly we will screen students out.

Wayne Kutzer, Director of the Department of Career and Technology Education, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

June Herman, American Heart Association, testified in favor of the bill. (Written testimony attached)

John Pretzer, Superintendent at Scranton, testified in favor of the bill. He was originally against the bill but as he thought about it he thought maybe he should support it. As we approach 24 credit hours required, it could put them on a pretty level playing field with other schools across the state. We need to look at the high school student and their capabilities. If a high school student takes 6 classes per year and goes to school 4 years, that is 24 units. They take pride in their electives in Scranton, when do the kids fit that in? They have a large variety of students in high school. He has students who will not pass 4 math classes. P16 did a great job but he doesn't agree with all of their initiatives. He has 3 children, 1 in college and he always wonders why is she on break so often. 155 contact days is not enough. We need to make our entrance qualifications a little more rigorous. Maybe 100% of the students who come out of our high schools are not ready for college.. Maybe we need to determine who they are before we take the tuition from them.

Senator Bakke asked if he anticipates a high cost to add the additional coursework?

Mr. Pretzer said he would anticipate an increase he has not calculated how much. His main concern is the availability of these teachers and his ability to attract them to a rural school.

Senator Flakoll asked if JPA's could be a delivery option.

Mr. Pretzer said possibly but it is difficult to share personnel because the teacher needs to be there unless they have a block schedule.

Verle Reineke from Bismarck wanted to make a comment. He is concerned about writing skills. He has lived here 40 years. His experience with teaching high school and college is that

students have terrible writing skills. People need to be able to articulate. He doesn't know what needs to be done but he is concerned. Inability to speak and write clearly also indicates muddled thinking.

Chairman Freborg closed the hearing on SB 2309.

Senator Flakoll said 12 meetings at \$25,000 per meeting still makes him choke. He and Senator Gary Lee were on the P16 committee. Legislators were not paid to be there, they paid travel costs and food. It takes a lot of miles to get to \$1000. Maybe some of the money is going to the agencies to pay down some of the salary expense. He has no clue where the fiscal note is coming from. He assumes the meetings will be in the lower 48.

Senator Gary Lee said they include outside experts and facilitation.

Senator Flakoll said which they did the last time without taking proper protocol with respect to putting it out for bids.

Senator Flakoll asked if the cost per legislative day is quoted at being \$52,000? This cost is half of that.

Chairman Freborg asked how many people would be involved in the committee?

Senator Flakoll said less than P16 where attendance averaged about 27. He said 40 but that is a little high.

Senator Bakke asked how any consensus is reached with 40 people sitting around a table? There is not a dollar amount in the bill; it's in the fiscal note.

Chairman Freborg said there is an unspecified cost in the bill, the fiscal note reflects that.

Senator Bakke asked if we can amend the fiscal note.

Chairman Freborg said we would have to change the bill.

Senator Flakoll said Greg Gallagher's staff, Department of Public Instruction and Higher Education could do this on their own without our blessing.

Chairman Freborg said if they don't get the money they will have to do it on their own, it will have to show up in a budget somewhere.

Senator Bakke said the bill calls for meeting once a year, the fiscal note says 12 meetings.

Senator Gary Lee said the joint board is already law, to pursue alignment, they would need to put a plan together and it will take more time.

Senator Flakoll said he wishes we had a better handle on the long term cost of this. The fiscal note doesn't tell us where we are at down the road, \$50 million or \$150 million.

Senator Bakke said she sensed they want to eliminate sections 2 and 3.

Chairman Freborg said if we don't address sections 2 and 3, does that say very much?

Senator Flakoll said if we gut that out and leave the other?

Chairman Freborg said that is what Greg Gallagher said was premature.

Senator Flakoll said his concern is they may be in the ready, aim, aim, aim, aim, oops mode again.

Chairman Freborg said he is wondering what we are really doing if we take them out, pursuing alignment, we have been hearing that for a long time.

Senator Bakke said Senator Gary Lee had a good suggestion, perhaps we leave 2 and 3 in and take off #4 at the bottom of page 1 and that leaves them with the responsibility of doing it. She doesn't want to undermine the P16.

Senator Gary Lee said if we would eliminate the underscored language in section 1, that would say this joint board has to do whatever we say in section 2 and 3. One of the concerns of P16 was, they had a date of 2012 to start this and that they used, for example, 4 years rather than 4 units of English so it wasn't just seat time. It probably gets rid of the fiscal note.

Chairman Freborg said the 2012 – 2013 school year.

Senator Gary Lee said yes, for subsection 1 in section 3. They have the dates correct. Also, on section 2, it changes the graduation requirements.

Chairman Freborg said the additional number of units required in section 2 would be at the students' discretion if we took out section 3?

Senator Flakoll asked if the school could ease them into that by having more rigorous requirements?

Chairman Freborg said some schools have higher requirements.

Senator Gary Lee said in terms of the Governor's Commission and working on adequacy, would they take on this kind of work in terms of defining curriculum?

Senator Flakoll said he hates to predict. There are two sides to adequacy: financial and base or core requirements.

Chairman Freborg said that would mean something like this in section 3 because we have requirements now. Evidently we have to get a little tougher in some areas to give them the opportunities, as in math and science.

Senator Flakoll said he said in the P16 meetings and he will say it again, under section 3 subsection 2, lines 28 – 29, where we have now upped the requirement in math from 3 to 4, we should say 3 math, 3 science and 1 science or math to give them a little bit of choice.

Chairman Freborg said as far away as that is, would there be problem taking out subsection 2. This will be revisited 2 or 3 times before we get to 2014.

Senator Bakke said a lot of colleges are changing their entrance requirements, many require 4 years of math and 4 years of science. This plays into those trends as well.

Chairman Freborg asked if there is a similar bill in the house. (Nancy Sand nodded that there is.)

Senator Flakoll said there is a similar bill on tracking he doesn't know if that will get any traction.

Senator Bakke asked if Senator Flakoll and Senator Gary Lee were on P16.

They said they were.

The committee discussed a house bill sponsored by Representative Kelsch that deals with academic tracks.

Senator Bakke asked if we want them to meet at a cost of \$300,000. Where are they meeting?

Senator Flakoll said what they are asking to do with the fiscal note is what they can do already, to discuss what has already been passed at a cost of \$1000 per member per meeting.

Senator Taylor said if we like some parts, we could correct the things didn't align with P16 , we could attach an appropriation less than the fiscal note and that would take care of it.

Chairman Freborg said one problem is the fiscal note says we are requiring that kind of a cost and that has to be done to implement this bill. We could line item the cost and limit the cost per meeting. Most people that would attend the meeting are from Bismarck. How can they possibly spend that much money?

Senator Gary Lee said if we, in section one, eliminate the underscored language, wouldn't that eliminate the fiscal note? They are creating a system in subsection 4 of section 1, if we took that out they already have the bodies . If we change units to years in section 3...

Chairman Freborg said he thinks it would.

Senator Gary Lee said the idea is something we should continue to move forward. He suggests we amend the bill by taking the underscored language out of section 1, in subsection 1 and subsection 4; in subsection 3, change the units to years. He is not sure what that means but it was referenced in most of the testimony we heard.

Senator Flakoll said as an example if you take physical education for one year that is not one unit, that may be a quarter unit.

Senator Taylor said another suggestion is on page 2 line 22 the and be replaced by or and the same change on page 3 line 7.

Senator Bakke said we may have to combine F and G into one line.

Chairman Freborg said he doesn't believe so.

Senator Flakoll said on page 1 line 16 we could change coordinating to pursuing alignment between...

Senator Gary Lee said he doesn't know the intent, it is an awful fine line they are trying to ride, leaving coordinating would allow them to do it without a hefty price tag.

Chairman Freborg asked what kind of answer he got when he asked about the high cost of the meetings?

Senator Flakoll said he indicated it was based on what they spent the last interim for the P16 committee. They had some federal funds that were available and we had to provide a match so every day there was a meeting, they had to detail how much it would cost to hire the members for that day. The public employees and legislators were the only ones who were not paid to be there.

Senator Gary Lee moved the amendment being prepared by the intern, seconded by Senator Taylor.

Senator Gary Lee said it is his intent to have a choice between foreign language or fine arts or career technology.

The motion passed 5 – 0.

Senator Flakoll moved a Do Pass As Amended and rerefer to appropriations if necessary on SB 2309, seconded by Senator Gary Lee.

The motion passed 5 – 0. Senator Gary Lee will carry the bill.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: March 19, 2007

Recorder Job Number: none

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

While in the Senate Education Committee to discuss HB 1260, Tom Decker, Department of Public Instruction, distributed copies of Gary Gronberg's House testimony on SB 2309, dealing with adding members of the P16 task force to the North Dakota Commission on Education.

Mr. Decker had discussed this with the committee last week and thought they would be interested in the testimony. (Written testimony attached)

FISCAL NOTE

Requested by Legislative Council
04/23/2007

Amendment to: Engrossed
SB 2309

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This bill establishes high school graduation requirements effective 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2011-12. It requires the Department of Public Instruction work with schools to identify courses that meet requirements for graduation and that schools notify the department of local graduation requirements.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

An estimated \$75,000 would be needed for holding three to four meetings of a statewide selected group to analyze course content, standards, and alignment.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

None.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

See 2B above.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

None.

Name:	Gary Gronberg & Anita Decker	Agency:	Public Instruction
Phone Number:	328-1240 & 328-1718	Date Prepared:	04/23/2007

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
04/13/2007

Amendment to: Engrossed
 SB 2309

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$75,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This bill establishes high school graduation requirements effective 2008-2009. It also requires that the Department of Public Instruction work with school districts to identify courses that meet requirements for graduation and that schools notify the department of local graduation requirements.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

An estimated \$75,000 would be needed for holding three to four meetings of a statewide selected group to analyze course content, standards, and alignment.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

None.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

See 2B above.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

None.

Name:	Gary Gronberg & Anita Decker	Agency:	Public Instruction
Phone Number:	328-1240 & 328-1718	Date Prepared:	04/13/2007

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
03/16/2007

Amendment to: Engrossed
 SB 2309

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

The bill increases the number of units required for high school graduation by one unit for 2009-10 and adds two additional units for 2011-12.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

Costs associated would be minimal since these courses are currently required to be offered by schools in NDCC 15.1-21-02 and current staffing would be adequate in most school districts.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

None.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

See impact under 2A above.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

None.

Name:	Gary Gronberg & Anita Decker	Agency:	Public Instruction
Phone Number:	328-1240 & 328-1718	Date Prepared:	03/16/2007

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
02/01/2007

Amendment to: SB 2309

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

Section 1 increases the number of units required for high school graduation by one unit for 2009-10 and adds two additional units for 2011-12. Section 2 lists requirements that a student must successfully complete to graduate.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

Costs under Section 1 would be minimal since these courses are currently required to be offered by schools in NDCC 15.1-21-02 and current staffing would be adequate in most school districts. There would be no additional costs under Section 2 until the 2011-13 biennium.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

None.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

See impact under 2A above.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

None.

Name:	Gary Gronberg & Anita Decker	Agency:	Public Instruction
Phone Number:	328-1240 & 328-1718	Date Prepared:	02/02/2007

FISCAL NOTE
Requested by Legislative Council
01/18/2007

Bill/Resolution No.: SB 2309

1A. State fiscal effect: *Identify the state fiscal effect and the fiscal effect on agency appropriations compared to funding levels and appropriations anticipated under current law.*

	2005-2007 Biennium		2007-2009 Biennium		2009-2011 Biennium	
	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds	General Fund	Other Funds
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Appropriations	\$0	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

1B. County, city, and school district fiscal effect: *Identify the fiscal effect on the appropriate political subdivision.*

2005-2007 Biennium			2007-2009 Biennium			2009-2011 Biennium		
Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts	Counties	Cities	School Districts
\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

2A. Bill and fiscal impact summary: *Provide a brief summary of the measure, including description of the provisions having fiscal impact (limited to 300 characters).*

This bill provides for creating alignment between K-12 schools and colleges. Further it increases the number of units required for high school graduation and extends into the 2013-2015 biennium in defining high school courses required for graduation.

B. Fiscal impact sections: *Identify and provide a brief description of the sections of the measure which have fiscal impact. Include any assumptions and comments relevant to the analysis.*

During the 2007-2009 biennium, aligning entrance and exit requirements across two separate educational systems will require a minimum of 12 meetings at approximately \$25,000 per meeting to bring requisite stakeholders together. Until the work of the alignment group is completed, it is extremely difficult to estimate costs for Section 3. Costs under Section 2 would be minimal since current staffing would be adequate in most school districts.

3. State fiscal effect detail: *For information shown under state fiscal effect in 1A, please:*

A. Revenues: *Explain the revenue amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each revenue type and fund affected and any amounts included in the executive budget.*

None.

B. Expenditures: *Explain the expenditure amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency, line item, and fund affected and the number of FTE positions affected.*

Bringing the appropriate stakeholders together across the biennium will require up to 12 meetings. Each meeting will cost about \$25,000—including travel, lodging, meals, printing, outside experts, and facilitation.

C. Appropriations: *Explain the appropriation amounts. Provide detail, when appropriate, for each agency and fund affected. Explain the relationship between the amounts shown for expenditures and appropriations. Indicate whether the appropriation is also included in the executive budget or relates to a continuing appropriation.*

Funding is from general fund moneys. This expenditure is neither in the Governor's budget nor in the budget of the Department of Public Instruction. It is currently a one-time expenditure.

Name:	Gary Gronberg & Anita Decker	Agency:	Public Instruction
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Phone Number: 328-1240 & 328-1718

Date Prepared: 01/22/2007

Proposed amendment to Senate Bill 2309

Page 1, line 16, remove the overstrike through "Coordinating" and remove "Pursuing alignment between"

Page 1, remove lines 22-24

Page 2, line 17, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 18, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 19, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 20, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 21, replace "unit" with "year"

Page 2, line 22, replace "unit" with "year", insert a comma immediately after foreign, remove "or", replace "; and" with "one year of fine arts or one year of career and technical education."

Page 2, remove line 23

Page 2, line 27, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 28, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 29, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 30, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 31, replace "unit" with "year"

Page 3, line 1, replace "unit" with "year", insert a comma immediately after foreign, remove "or", replace "; and" with "two years of fine arts or two years of career and technical education."

Page 3, remove line 2

proposed 1/29/07

Date: 1/29/07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Move Amendment Prepared by Intern

Motion Made By Sen. Lee Seconded By Sen. Taylor

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Freborg	✓		Senator Taylor	✓	
Senator Flakoll	✓		Senator Bakke	✓	
Senator Gary Lee	✓				

Total Yes 5 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Date: 1/29/07
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken

No Pass as Amended and Rerefer to
appropriate

Motion Made By

Sen. Flakoll

Seconded By

Sen. Lee

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Freborg	✓		Senator Taylor	✓	
Senator Flakoll	✓		Senator Bakke	✓	
Senator Gary Lee	✓				

Total Yes 5 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Sen. Lee

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2309: Education Committee (Sen. Freborg, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends **DO PASS** and **BE REREFERRED** to the **Appropriations Committee** (5 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2309 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 3, replace "sections 15.1-01-02 and" with "section"

Page 1, line 4, remove "and student proficiency"

Page 1, remove lines 6 through 24

Page 2, line 17, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 18, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 19, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 20, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 21, replace "unit" with "year" and after the underscored semicolon insert "and"

Page 2, line 22, replace "unit" with "year" and replace "; and" with ", fine arts, or career and technical education."

Page 2, remove line 23

Page 2, line 27, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 28, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 29, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 30, replace "units" with "years"

Page 2, line 31, replace "unit" with "year" and after the underscored semicolon insert "and"

Page 3, line 1, replace "units" with "years" and replace "; and" with ", fine arts, or career and technical education."

Page 3, remove line 2

Renumber accordingly

2007 SENATE APPROPRIATIONS

SB 2309

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

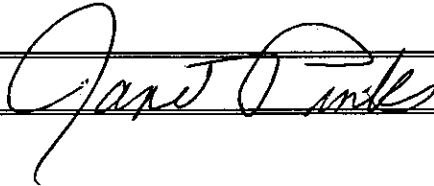
Senate Appropriations Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: 02/06/07

Recorder Job Number: 2309

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Holmberg opened the hearing on SB 2309.

Senator Dave Nething, District 12, Jamestown, introduced SB 2309 indicating that the bill came about as a result of learning 50 percent of college freshmen in the US take remedial education particularly in the areas of math and science. ND is 34 percent of college freshmen take remedial education and we want to find a way to reduce that number. The fiscal note should indicate what the cost of the remedial education is in ND. The P16 study called for looking into this issue and what appears in the original bill. If the students had the preparation they need and they could complete college in four years.

Chairman Holmberg indicated that the last time there was a change in graduation requirements is when the university system instigated them. This bill would require that by 2012 the requirements would change.

Senator Tallackson raised the question of completing college in four years and it was indicated that several factors go into students not completing in four years and this is just one factor.

Senator Holmberg indicated it is the rigors of the high school curriculum that creates the better and more successful student.

Gary Romberg, Assistant Superintendent, Department of Public Instruction, testified indicating the fiscal impact was difficult to put in place and that part of what is going on is that last session the legislature established the number of units needed for high school graduation and this was excised from the last requirements. This bill says what the high school must offer with 23 units over a four year high school education and this bill states what the student must take in order to successfully complete high school, 21 units are now required to increase in the future. Thereby, the fiscal note was hard to determine.

Senator Grindberg raised questions about section two and the spring of 2013 requirements and why there aren't more people here. The response was all of the significant groups were represented during the P16 process.

Senator Bowman indicated that when students are forced to take certain classes, the appropriation part of the bill will come on. This bill in his opinion is a way to get the bill passed and then we will have costs to come up with costs. The response was the classes are already offered and the instruction needs to be provided therefore there is no additional cost except maybe textbooks.

Senator Holmberg indicated this is a way of reducing electives so the students will take the required courses.

Senator Christmann questioned having 24 mandatory classes in four years, what does this allow for electives.

Senator Mathern discussed the fiscal note and why it was in this committee..

Chairman Holmberg indicated the original bill had a fiscal note of \$300,000 and by the time it got to this committee it was edited out.

Senator Krauter asked if it was new language on the back of the bill.

Senator Lindaas asked if we are taking into consideration that not all students have the same academic ability. He also indicated there is a bill that requires students remaining in school until the age of 18 and the requirements reach a point of having 5 years of high school to accomplish this. The response was this won't allow a lot of flexible time either to work afternoons or other things.

Deb Nielson, ND School Board Association, testified in support of SB 2309 indicating there will be a fiscal impact and until we know the we can't put this bill into place. We have supported the concept from the beginning is that all of these ideas have to go before the governor's commission next biennium defining adequacy, defining what an adequate education is, define what that will cost and how much the state is willing to pay. The concept of all the ideas needs to be defined.

Leann Nelson, ND Education Association, indicated they support the conceptual points of the bill, but they don't support the addition of course work. Some concerns include changing the mandatory age to 18, the course work requirements, the funding piece, the increases of class sizes, the increases in costs that will come immediately.

Mike Hillman, Vice Chairman, ND University System, distributed the position of the SBHE regarding P-16 (1) and The Expectations Gap and discussed both documents. He responded to what it takes to be prepared for college and for the work force. Both are potentially the same. He indicated when expectations are raised, students actually stay in high school and graduate, go on to higher education, and go into more challenging jobs.

Chairman Holmberg closed the hearing on SB 2309.

Senator Grindberg moved a DO PASS on SB 2309, **Senator Mathern** seconded. There was no discussion. A roll call vote was taken resulting in 12 yes, 0 no, and 2 absent.

Senator Gary Lee will carry the bill.

Date: 2/6/07
Roll Call Vote #:

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

Senate Appropriations Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number 2

Action Taken Do Pass

Motion Made By Grindberg

Seconded By Nathson

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Ray Holmberg, Chrm	✓		Senator Aaron Krauter		
Senator Bill Bowman, V Chrm	✓		Senator Elroy N. Lindaas,	✓	
Senator Tony Grindberg, V Chrm	✓		Senator Tim Mathern	✓	
Senator Randel Christmann	✓		Senator Larry J. Robinson	✓	
Senator Tom Fischer	✓		Senator Tom Seymour		
Senator Ralph L. Kilzer	✓		Senator Harvey Tallackson	✓	
Senator Karen K. Krebsbach	✓				
Senator Rich Wardner	✓				

Total (Yes) 12 No 0

Absent 2

Floor Assignment Gary Lee Edo

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2309, as engrossed: Appropriations Committee (Sen. Holmberg, Chairman)
recommends **DO PASS** (12 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING).
Engrossed SB 2309 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

2007 HOUSE EDUCATION

SB 2309

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. **SB 2309**

House Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: **12 March 07**

Recorder Job Number: **4862**

Committee Clerk Signature

Jan Prindle

Minutes:

Vice Chairman Meier opened the hearing of SB 2309.

Senator Dave Nething, District 12, introduced the bill. This bill relates to improving high school requirements. Nationwide 50% of college students require some form of remedial education. In ND we are at about 34%. It's still a very high number. The P-16 was concerned about this as well as are other folks. What I tried to do in the original bill was to mirror what the P-16 study indicated. This bill was amended in the Senate and I didn't see where the amendments materially affect the objectives of what the bill was. I believe that if we make these improvements to our requirements we could possibly see a college student finish in four years because they won't spend so much time in remedial. I also want to remind you of how expensive remedial is. When you have 34% basically not taking college course, they are taking courses that prepare them for college. I hope this Committee will see fit to continue to move this bill through.

Representative Solberg: On line 13, page 2, I have 8 small schools in my district, so it would be up to the schools to teach the two years of foreign language. Is that correct?

Senator Nething: This bill doesn't say that. The intent is that there are other options out there for teaching. I don't know if your schools are hooked into the interactive television systems. That's one way of doing it. They can co-op with another school to do it. We don't

say how they do it. Each school is going to have to make that determination. I think you students are just as important as any one else when they go to college and they should be prepared when they get there. Because your parents in your district are paying just like they are in my district and for them to take remedial education because they are not getting it in your schools is not fair to the parents.

Representative Hunsakor: Let's talk about math. In those smaller schools and maybe medium sized schools would be forced in time to offer the students that graduate would have to have four years of math and if it's a college math we are talking advanced algebra, geometry, and advanced math, and there are many kids in those schools that couldn't cut the mustard in those classes, so they would have some general math and other math to accommodate all the students which would mean the possibility of offering six, seven, even eight math classes per year. That would put a strain on smaller schools and having the staff and the facilities to accommodate that.

Senator Nething: Again, if they are not prepared for college as they are expected to be prepared then they start behind the eight ball so some how we have to find a balance to make it work.

Representative Hunsakor: What do these schools do to accommodate that situation? I'm fully aware of the fact that they should be prepared and these things are good but is it going to put a strain on them.

Senator Nething: It may. I talked to a student the other day and she said our schools are 8 miles apart and I don't know how long we'll be apart, we have 14 in high school in this school and they have something like 18 in the other school. Eight miles apart and they haven't consolidated? I want that to be a local decision but someplace along the line all these folks are going to have to decide what they want for their students if they want to go to college. I

don't pretend to be an administrator so I won't tell you how they are going break it out but each school is going to have its own concerns. There's no question about it.

Representative Herbel: The biggest thing I see about the bill is for the student that is really a marginal student and can't pass four years of math and four years of science. That's usually the area where toughest part is for kids. What do we do for those kids?

Senator Nething: I would guess that student wouldn't go to college.

Representative Herbel: But he is still going to have to graduate from high school.

Senator Nething: It will probably take him a little longer. We're not saying which math courses they have to be. We are just saying they gotta be prepared for college. I don't know what the alternatives would be but you could keep your eye on what the goal is and there are tough decisions, there's no question about it. Thirty-four percent of our students needing remedial math and science courses the fact is there is a tremendous expense to what we are doing now.

Representative Herbel: I have seen how so many kids struggle to get through the first three years that I can't imagine that if there is a fourth year being offered those kids I agree with what your intent here is. I think too we need to get kids better prepared. My concern is for those that don't have the skills and don't have the ability. What do we do for them? There is no leeway for that type of thing here.

Senator Nething: Keep in mind this is seven years down the road. Hopefully by then we'll have worked through those things. I don't know the answers to it. Someone ought to ask the question where the math teachers are going to come from. That's as important to me as anything else. I initially wanted to tie this into some scholarship efforts so we could shift students into wanting to become math teachers and science teachers but they told me they already had those programs in place.

Representative Mueller: I do applaud the intent of the bill but I do see some technical issues. In "can't be admitted to an institution of higher education in the state" it's obvious that the UND would be among those but are we also talking about the state school of science, MSU Bottineau, Akkers Business College, are those all institutions that would be affected by the bill?

Senator Nething: When we think of higher education it is the community colleges and baccalaureate colleges and our advanced degree universities and colleges. I don't know about the business college.

Representative Mueller: Some of our institutions, and maybe we had ought to have more of them, are specifically designed as trade schools and those things that someone may have an aptitude be it electrical work or carpentry and certainly some of the requirements that we asking of these students even currently in schools aren't necessarily ones that lend themselves well to that specific more narrow vocation and I'm wondering if that is the intent of what it is we are doing with 2309.

Senator Nething: They may need it even more in some of our community courses. If you were to go out to Bismarck State and look at the training they give to run a power plant for example you would think you would need a higher degree. I don't know. We are trying to compete in global market and we're losing in the education aspect of that because we are spending a lot of extra money in college getting our students ready to compete in a global market. That's got to be the vision. Where are these students going to go, not what is the problem today in the classroom? We've have to figure out a way to take care of that.

Representative Wall: Does this bill assume that all students need a four-year degree?

Senator Nething: No. Our university system isn't structured that way either.

Representative Wall: If that is not the case it seems there should be substitutions in here.

Senator Nething: I can only say from what I've seen, and it's limited, the community colleges need to have the student prepared as well as possible just like the liberal arts colleges do. That's for the benefit of the students. You don't want to handicap your students. We're making it too easy in the sense they have the choice to make and they don't want to make the choice that's the beneficial to them it appears. That's the proof of the pudding.

Representative Hunsakor: Let's take MSU Bottineau where they offer courses like golf course design, some practical nursing courses, a lot of those folks as Representative Herbel alluded to, can't handle all the math and all the sciences but they could go to small college and do very, very well. I have a problem with what happens to those kids.

Senator Nething: I wasn't part of the P-16 study. I think your chairman was and she may be able to answer those questions. You do mention the nursing. My wife is a nurse and she had and needed a heavy science background. Just because someone takes a 2-yr course to start with doesn't mean that in a few years they may not want to go into the full nursing program and that's where the background they have in the sciences will be of benefit to them.

Neutral Testimony:

Wayne Kutzer, director of the Department of Career and Technical Education.

(Testimony Attached.)

Representative Mueller: Did the deleted part reference what you have outlined to us and how to fulfill the math requirements for the example given.

Kutzer: It started to when it got to the duties of the joint boards and how they would operate. It added the section I'm talking about aligning. It didn't go quite far enough so there was an amendment offered to establish this alignment commission. There was a fiscal note on the original bill and I believe it was \$300.0. That was adjusted down and all of that was left out of the bill. I can sure get a copy of those things to you.

Representative Herbel: Because of the continuity going from Algebra I to Algebra II, the first half of the year is almost a review so you can set up the second half. So for the most part you would end up just being a repeat of the latter part of Algebra I. This kind of waters it down. I'd like your comments on that.

Kutzer: The main emphasis of the MI was the fact that the student had math content. Whether Algebra II is the signature course that is needed, what this lays out is a process where there is flexibility for all students. They can design the curriculum around what they need in terms of a math. That's what I was trying to bring out—flexibility.

Chairman Kelsch: One thing I find interesting about MI and it's something I get calls and complaints about all the time, is the fact that we could take Algebra I in the eighth grade and it would count. Is that something that you think it would be good for us to be looking at as well?

Kutzer: Generally speaking, yes. I think it would be good. That's something the alignment committee could be doing.

Representative C. B. Haas, District 36, testified on the bill. I wasn't going to get up and speak on this bill but I really feel like I have to. It's difficult for me to understand why we can't embrace something that is going to advantage our students as they leave high school rather than disadvantage them. We think of math and science courses only in traditional terms. We have to start thinking beyond that. There is any number of applied math courses, applied sciences courses that teach math or science content that are absolutely essential for jobs and occupations other than jobs or occupations that requires a baccalaureate degree. I can give you an example. In Dickinson I lived next to a gentleman who was an apprentice electrician and he was trying to prepare himself to take the journeyman test. He was woefully inadequate in mathematics. I tutored him in specific mathematics that related to electricity. It enabled him to learn a specific set of math concepts that enabled him to take the test and become a

journeyman electrician. What I'm saying is that the sky is the limit on the types of math courses and science courses that could be designed that would benefit our students even if they are not going to a four-year institution. It is absolutely deplorable that the high school education system in the state of ND produces 32% of its graduates that have to take remedial education at the university level. That's also at the postsecondary voc tech schools. I don't think that's acceptable. There are ways we can come up with alternative courses that will teach the math and science concepts that are necessary for our kids to succeed even if they don't go to a postsecondary voc tech school or a four-year institution. Even if they become an apprentice plumber or electrician or some other field that is a well-paid trade, it will enable these young people to advance in whatever profession they choose. We need to strengthen these requirements.

Representative Herbel: I'm not as familiar as what available in the JPAs, but would there be enough available in all JPAs to cover the situation if this adopted.

Representative Haas: I think that's entirely possible. I think it's entirely possible when it comes to the foreign language requirements in here. We have to start thinking about alternative ways of delivering these courses to our kids. Maybe a good amount of it is going to be on line. We passed a bill here where we wanted DPI to start establishing a procedure whereby kids can take online courses from out-of-state online schools and get credit for them. We want it to be legitimate, valuable, and accredited institutions that provide this training. I don't think about all of the possibilities of doing this. We need to enact something like this to set the framework so that those conversations and debates can begin.

Representative Hanson: The drop out in ND has been increasing over the past few years. Do you think this will increase it more?

Representative Haas: No. I do not. I taught vocational agriculture and I had to teach kids how to balance a ration by calculating the volume of different types of materials when they were mixing concrete, etc. One particular example comes to my mind. When I had a class of sophomores who may have had a particular course in algebra and I taught them how to balance rations I was solving algebraic equations with two unknowns. As soon as those kids could see that there was some value, some meaning, some purpose for learning how to use and solve an algebraic equation with two unknowns, they caught on immediately. They did not forget that. They were balancing rations for their pigs and their cows on their farms. It's applied math. If you can provide a course that is going to be designed in such a way that it caters to a particular student's interest, they will learn the math concepts. Those are legitimate math courses.

Bev Nielson, ND School Boards Association, testified on behalf of the bill. (Testimony Attached.)

Chairman Kelsch: There is going to be a study put on to a bill. (She read excerpts.) Would that suffice?

Nielson: That would be with the addition of the estimated cost for the capacity for delivering that type of program.

Mike Hillman, vice chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, ND University System, testified on behalf of the bill. I became a member of the P-16 Task Force and after 9 months of intense discussion, the Task Force did not discern any difference in the requirements between the preparation for college and the preparation for entering the workforce. The eight private sector members of the Task Force were insisting on having higher skill levels coming out of high school. We had one employer who feels they have to administer a basic math exam to recent high school graduates that come to work for them

because students graduating from high school don't have the basic requirements they are looking for. I do think there is a need that has been well described with the global competition with science and technology being a key part of that and with mathematics really being the language of science and technology, we really need to ramp up particularly with mathematics instruction in our high schools. There is a lot of concern with students who won't be able to take four years of math successfully. I think ND is in the best position of any state to offer four years of math in high school. If you look at the environment of students before they enter school, the percentage of parents that read to their children before they come to school and the percentage of parents with college degrees, the percentage of families that are at least twice the poverty level, ND is at or near the top of the country in those non-school related factors. If you look at the NAPE test in the 4th grade, we are at or near the top of the country in achievement. If you look at the exam in 8th grade, ND performance is near the top of the country. However something happens or doesn't happen as Superintendent Paul Johnson of Bismarck says, there's a disconnect in high school. By the time our students graduate from high school they have lost some of that achievement. If you look at our SAT scores, we're just slightly above the national average. Every major report focuses on what happens or doesn't happen in high school. That needs to be ramped up. The expectations clearly need to be increased. There is a question about if those students drop out with these higher requirements. Actually the experience in other states has been that when students are challenged they actually stay in school as they find it more meaningful. More students graduate and more students go on and become successful. One state I will use as an example is Oklahoma. They increased their requirement and they found that ACT scores rose, rigorous course taking increased particularly among minority students, student educational aspirations have risen, college attendance rates go up, college remediation rates

dropped and probably most importantly, the gaps between and among demographic subgroups have narrowed. Everyone's achievement goes up but those at bottom showed the largest achievement. I do think it is important that bill does discuss years and not units. We require at the universities three math for admission. By the time they enter college some have not had mathematics for three years. What happens when you don't practice mathematics skills? Those skills decline and that really contributes to the large number of remedial students. I think the way the bill is worded with "years" accommodates many flexible situations. We need to focus on preparing students when they exit high school for college or a challenging work requirement. When they haven't taken those courses in two years, they are not really prepared. I do need to point out one problem with the bill and that is that the state constitution does require the university system to have open admission at some level in the state. The state board of higher education does define that at the 2-year campuses. We would suggest that be amended out. We receive a number of students in college that don't come directly out of high school. They may have graduated two, five or ten years ago. For practical purposes I suggest those changes be made.

Representative Mueller: The specific language would have deleted is what?

Hillman: Page 1, line 20, the words "or be admitted to an institution of higher education in this state" also the same language on Page 2, line 6.

Doug Johnson, ND Council of Educational Leaders testified neutral on the bill. When this bill was initially introduced on the Senate side we were opposed to it with the engrossments that have been made to the bill we have moved to a neutral position. Some of the concerns that school boards have, we have the same. The majority of high schools are meeting the 22 credit requirement. There are a few at 21 but I do not think the way section 1 of the currently written bill is going to impact significantly the school districts. We do have

concerns with section 2 in that it is premature to be introduced in this bill. Our recommendation would be to put in as part of 2200 and have the Commission do research on the bill or attach it to HCR 3012 which is looking at the funding of education. Study this for adoption at a later date. The fiscal note says there is no fiscal impact in the future. I think there will be fiscal impact to particularly the small school districts as you add courses you might have to add teachers so there might be fiscal impact. A concern that I have on section 2. 1. f. about whether the word "or" should be inserted in those selections.

Representative Herbel: Are the JPAs equipped right now to offer these math courses? Will they be ready?

Johnson: I think when they go in to effect they will be equipped through ITV or perhaps traveling teachers. I have not heard the discussion on this specific bill and these particular issues. I think they will be able to gear up for that. Are they ready now; I don't have a clear answer for you.

Representative Hanson: If a student failed a course along the way would it be a burden on him to try to get caught up with all these extra units?

Johnson: If a high school offers seven classes you got 28 units you can take in a four-year period of time. They have 6 options to retake courses at 22 credits; at 24 they only have 4. That is assuming all students would take a full schedule of seven classes all four years of high school. Going to 24 credits means every student will be in a classroom 6 periods of a 7 period day. That's the traditional school day. Some do run an 8 period day with an early bird class or an after school class to accommodate the needs of those students. We would possibly see an increased need for summer school.

Nancy Sands, ND Education Association: We have some of the same concerns that you have already heard although we believe that setting high expectations of students is good. We would like to see some additional study and that would be our recommendation.

Pat Anderson, assistant director of School Health, DPI: (Testimony Attached.) The written testimony provides an amendment to add one-half unit of health to the requirements.

Gary Gronberg, assistant superintendent, DPI provided information from the DPI. (Testimony Attached.) He proposed a merger of this bill into SB 2200.

Vice Chairman Meier: Did you make this same proposal to the Senate?

Gronberg: Yes.

Representative Mueller: We have had testimony that said that section 1 may be okay and section 2 may have some problems. Would you have a problem accepting Section I minus Section 2 until such time as the issues you outlined in your testimony are addressed?

Gronberg: It still wasn't resolved. The Education Commission supported the standards based efforts in terms the collision of standards and units. We still have that existing in a bill that would define a number of units rather than competency against standards. There was also assessment involved in the earlier rendition of this bill having to do with looking at students' competencies and skills sets—the outcomes of courses. We think there has to be a resolution to that. If you keep something in here regarding units, don't keep references regarding standards. There is no resolution on that. We are still trying to hang on to the old as we move to a standards based system. There is still a collision of the two systems that need to be resolved.

Chairman Kelsch: Could this alignment commission that you lined out, does that necessarily have to be in law or could it an advisory committee that was done similar to the P-16?

Gronberg: It doesn't have to be in law, but it should be defined somewhere.

Representative Wall: On the top of page 4, looking through who you would have on the advisory committee and the top one is three individuals appointed by the chairman of the State Board of Higher Education to represent the faculty within the ND University System. I agree with that. My question is did you consider having three public school teacher or superintendents, individuals, because they are important.

Gronberg: What we found with the P-16 group—that had 38 members on it. That's probably too many. In an effort to cut down here, we went to representatives of the various organizations rather than large numbers. What we find missing as far as the Governor's Education Commission as this point are representation from Higher Education, there are no parents, there are no people from the business community that can address knowledge and skills necessary for entering into the workforce. We felt those were more important than the education people. There are plenty of education people who are going to have their ways to mold and mend this. The voices that I think need to help us define what an adequate education is are people outside of the education field.

Representative Hunsakor: Following up on that it seems important to have input from the high school level. What you would think of saying two individuals from the high school level?

Gronberg: We aren't married to any of these things. The rationale had to do with that a group of 38 begins to get unwieldy. These are just suggestions or thoughts or ideas—something to work from.

There being no further testimony, Chairman Kelsch closed the hearing of SB 2309.

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. **SB 2309**

House Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: **13 March 07 (p.m.)**

Recorder Job Number: **5005**

Committee Clerk Signature

Jan Prindle

Minutes:

Chairman Kelsch opened discussion of SB 2309

Representative Haas: I Move to Amend by removing on page 1, line 1 "or be admitted to an institution of higher education in this state" and on page 2, line 6, "or be admitted to an institution of higher education in this state" and on line 3 after language, the word "or," and line 13 after language "or,".

Representative Sukat: I second.

Representative Herbel: There was also some talk about eliminating Section 2. Is that still something for consideration?

Chairman Kelsch: That is a consideration and we'll take this amendment first.

Representative Karls: Why the "or"?

Chairman Kelsch: They could offer one year of foreign or Native American language or fine arts or career and technical education. It was inferred but it wasn't actually laid out.

A voice vote was taken on the amendment: The motion carried.

Representative Herbel: I move to amend by removing Section 2.

Representative Johnson: I second.

A roll call vote was taken: Yes: 10, No: 2, Absent: 1 (Mueller)

Representative Wall: I am not concerned about 2009-10. In 2011-12 when we up to 24 credits, is this an unfunded mandate that a lot of schools will have trouble meeting by hiring extra teachers and developing extra curriculum? Do you think the schools have the curriculum in place so they can offer 6 offerings per day?

Chairman Kelsch: The schools have the curriculum in place. What was said was that students will have to take 6 credit hours each semester the four years that they are in high school. One of the things discussed in the P-16 commission meetings this summer was a big concern by people that students are only taking five classes per day especially in the senior year when they are basically absent from school. I think this is one way the commission thought they would keep the kids studying and keep those skills strong. There was a question about the drop out rate. Other states that have this have not seen an increase in their drop out rates.

Representative Hunskor: This is five years down the road. This can be back again within the next five years. Everyone will be thinking about this and if it isn't going to work there will be a movement to get it back again.

Vice Chairman Meier: A concern I have is that we are one of the states that has the lowest requirements for high school graduation. Most now require 22.

Chairman Kelsch: Most are 22 and we are the lowest.

Vice Chairman Meier: It is time it was addressed.

Chairman Kelsch: Representative Meier does have a study for the P-16 to continue its work and we know that SB 2200 has the Education Commission that will be looking at adequacy and the only concern I've heard was from Bev Nielson and I do share that, to have some sort of a committee to focus coming up with the proper coursework is and what those requirements

should be. The P-16 was put together outside of the legislature. It could be done creatively outside of the legislature as well.

Representative Haas: I'm going to oppose this last motion because I think Representative Hunskor is right. How many studies do we have to do before we take some action? P-16 did a pretty comprehensive job. If we water this down then people aren't going to pay attention to it. If we leave it in there and then people will start thinking about it. It can be modified in another two years very easily. I think we have to leave it in there so we focus on it and look at alternatives. Maybe this isn't exactly right but if we don't do that it's going to fall by the wayside and we'll study it for another two years and then we'll come back and say, "Was that study really adequate, maybe we should study it for two more years." There is a time when action is required not perpetual studies.

A voice vote was taken—inconclusive.

A roll call vote was taken: Yes: 10, No: 2, Absent: 1 (Mueller)

The amendment was adopted.

Vice Chairman Meier: I move Do Pass as Amended.

Representative Myxter: I second.

A roll call vote was taken: Yes: 7, No: 5, Absent: (Mueller)

Representative Meier will carry the bill.

Date: 13 Mar 07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

House Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Amend

Motion Made By Haas Seconded By Sukat

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch			Rep Hanson		
V Chairman Meier			Rep Hunskor		
Rep Haas			Rep Mueller		
Rep Herbel			Rep Myxter		
Rep Johnson			Rep Solberg		
Rep Karls					
Rep Sukut					
Rep Wall					

Total Yes _____ No _____

Absent _____

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Pg 1 Line 1 omit Now be admitted to an institution of higher ed
2 6 omit in the state 11

Line 13 language or, or,

Carried

Date: 13 Mar 07
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

House Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Take out Section 2

Motion Made By Herbel Seconded By Johnson

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch		✓	Rep Hanson	✓	
V Chairman Meier	✓		Rep Hunsakor	✓	
Rep Haas		✓	Rep Mueller	✓	
Rep Herbel	✓		Rep Myxter	✓	
Rep Johnson	✓		Rep Solberg	✓	
Rep Karls	✓				
Rep Sukut	✓				
Rep Wall	✓				

Total Yes 10 No 2

Absent 1

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

Date: 13 Mar 07
Roll Call Vote #: 3

2007 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES

BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

House Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken See Pass as Amended

Motion Made By Meier Seconded By Myxter

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Kelsch	✓		Rep Hanson		✓
V Chairman Meier	✓		Rep Hunskor	✓	
Rep Haas	✓		Rep Mueller	✓	
Rep Herbel		✓	Rep Myxter	✓	
Rep Johnson		✓	Rep Solberg	✓	
Rep Karls		✓			
Rep Sukut	✓				
Rep Wall		✓			

Total Yes 7 No 5

Absent 1

Floor Assignment Meier

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2309, as engrossed: Education Committee (Rep. R. Kelsch, Chairman) recommends AMENDMENTS AS FOLLOWS and when so amended, recommends DO PASS (7 YEAS, 5 NAYS, 1 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). Engrossed SB 2309 was placed on the Sixth order on the calendar.

Page 1, line 1, remove "create and enact a new section to chapter 15.1-21 of the North Dakota"

Page 1, line 2, remove "Century Code, relating to high school coursework requirements; and to"

Page 1, remove lines 15 through 24

Page 2, remove lines 1 through 14

Renumber accordingly

2007 SENATE EDUCATION

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

SB 2309

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

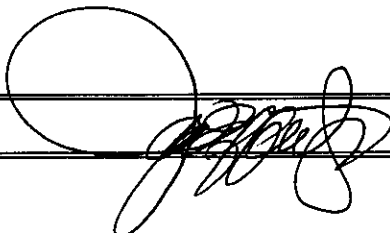
Senate Education Committee

XX Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: March 28, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 5597

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Senator Gary Lee called the conference committee to order. All members were present.

Senator Gary Lee said the bill relates to high school graduation requirements. The Senate version had specific requirements while the House version removed section 2. He would like to hear the explanation for how the House committee made their decision.

Representative Meier said the House Education Committee removed section 2. They heard from school districts this is going too far to do this in the upcoming biennium. They felt it was a good start to increase the graduation requirements to 22 for the next biennium and further 2 more for the next biennium to follow. They felt specific course requirements was going too far. Senator Taylor said the Senate version required a change in the 2012 – 2013 biennium. It was four years in the future when it left the Senate. The course offerings weren't lined out until 2012.

Representative Meier said that is correct. There is an adequacy study that is on the House Education side now. They felt strongly the study should be done and the needs determined before the requirements are made.

Senator Gary Lee said the 2012 class that is listed in section 2 is probably the incoming freshmen class for next year.

Senator Flakoll asked if there was a feeling on the House side that there is a problem out there in terms of some of the areas such as math and science?

Representative Hunskor said yes. He talked with all 7 superintendents from his district.

Section 1 is not a serious problem; section 2 is a serious problem. The story he heard from one after another is in math, for example, the academically talented students and non talented would be put together in one class. The teacher has to teach to the lower spectrum in order for them not to be frustrated because they don't understand. The academically talented are then bored. In order to get around this situation, they would have to offer other math classes for the academically untalented which would mean the smaller schools would have to hire another teacher. This causes some major problems. They also thought this would kill their tech and home ec programs. If a student failed a class or two, how would they be accommodated? Some kids would drop out if forced to take math and science if they intended to become a welder or some other profession that would not require all the math and science. To sum it up, they said they are giving the academically talented kids math and science at the level they need and they are getting lots of it. For those in the lower quartile, those who struggle with math and science, it is going to cause a lot of frustration.

Senator Flakoll said he is frustrated that we are only teaching the smart kids. Was there any discussion on the House side regarding broadening the definition of a math course so that consumer math or some business class would count towards the math requirement?

Representative Meier said she does not recall much discussion about that.

Representative Hunskor said if those classes are not already being taught, then that would require hiring another teacher.

Senator Flakoll said we have made some significant strides this session to offer alternatives such as electronic course delivery or the Division of Independent Study. In the P16 committee

there was also talk about giving students options, requiring three years of math and three years of science then giving the option of a science tract or math tract in the fourth year. Was this discussed in the House?

Representative Meier said they did not think about it and they could discuss it.

Senator Gary Lee asked if the years or the courses were the biggest area of concern. If the years were advanced to the following school year in section 2, would that help? It would give school districts another year to prepare. The P16 committee had considerable discussion on the rigor of curriculum and this information came from that group. It is not a surprise that its here in this bill.

Representative Hunsakor asked if something like this is good. We have a broad spectrum of schools from Fargo to Welford. Can we mandate something like this to be a fit for all of them?

Our academically talented students are getting math and science. The administrators are heading their curriculum in that direction. They are doing what they need to do. This won't benefit that group, they are already there. It is the lower quartile that will be frustrated.

Senator Gary Lee said if we are going to increase the requirements to 24, what are they going to be taking if they are not going to be filling in with these kinds of courses?

Representative Hunsakor said that is another issue. He understands.

Representative Wall said one of the problems they saw with these requirements is electives would suffer. High school is a time to explore. The school districts will use available staff to offer the courses. It may or may not be math or science related courses.

Senator Flakoll said on the Senate side we have continually heard about the senior year that is not productive. They have often fulfilled their required coursework. Has the House heard those same things? Will the Senate or House version of this bill help make the senior year more productive?

Representative Meier said she has a son who is a junior in high school. He would be almost ready to graduate at the end of this year because he has nearly enough credits. She has allowed him to make his own decisions and he has chosen to take a full schedule next year, even though he wouldn't have to. He is a "blue collar student" who works hard for his grades. There are a lot of students who feel the same way.

Representative Wall said he hears the senior year is a wasted year. As a 24 year teacher of seniors, this concerns him. Some schools still require a student to carry a minimum number of credits per semester. In his area, most seniors were motivated; some took college classes as high school seniors.

Senator Flakoll said it is about the classes they don't take. Not everyone has the individual drive or a family to encourage the selection of rigorous courses. They heard quite often in the P16 commission that many juniors have completed their math requirements so they take no math their senior year. They then go on to college and are expected to take math again. It is like a finely trained athlete that did not train for a year. It is asking a lot of them with a year off the horse. What drove this on the P16 commission is the unacceptable level of remediation that is being seen in the University System. Kids want to take the path of least resistance and we are doing them a disservice. We have a constitutional requirement to offer education with uniform, core requirements. Uniformity is not just a fiscal issue. JPA's can help smaller schools with this. He is not ready to let go, we need to provide the basics. His Senate colleagues felt if we offer these requirements, we need to broaden the scope of what is a math or science course. Many other things beyond algebra would qualify. Many students headed for college need help with consumer math such as managing credit card debt.

Senator Taylor said he has sympathy with the rural schools and maybe some changes in timing would help, by moving the deadline two years ahead which would also allow study of

adequacy and to include JPA's. There is a lot of science in agriculture and a lot of math in the building trades. He doesn't want to give up on the rural schools. It is important to challenge the students. People perform to the level of expectation.

Representative Meier asked if the Senate had discussion on the effect of this bill on private schools.

Senator Gary Lee said he doesn't recall such a discussion but they would be covered under the terms of non-public schools.

Representative Hunskor said the P16 message is getting out to schools. They know students need to gear up. Schools are asking what more they can do, their funds are limited. In smaller schools, kids are in 6 classes per day. He suggested that some of the remedial work in college is a result of students going on to college who shouldn't be there. They should perhaps be at Wahpeton or Devils Lake.

Senator Flakoll said Wahpeton and Devils Lake are colleges, too. High school graduates are not as fully prepared as the colleges would like to see. We should not set up the "haves" and the "have nots".

Senator Gary Lee asked if any of the courses listed are acceptable, could some be put off for a while?

Representative Hunskor said schools are doing 4 years of English now. Four years of science is not a huge issue. Math is a huge issue.

Senator Gary Lee asked about social studies, physical education and language. Is the challenge in the time table?

Representative Hunskor said math is the biggest challenge.

Representative Meier said she wanted to visit with the superintendent of the Bismarck Public Schools and was unable to reach him. When the conference committee meets next, she will have visited with him and can share his thoughts with the committee.

Senator Gary Lee asked the committee to consider some suggestions and adjourned the meeting until the call of the chair.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

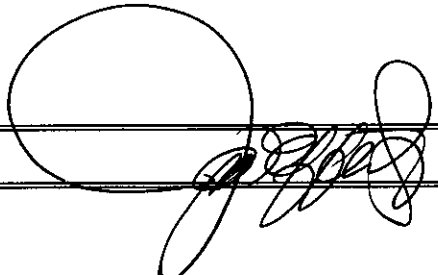
Senate Education Committee

x Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: April 4, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 5719

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Senator Gary Lee called the conference committee on SB 2309 to order. All members were present.

Representative Hunsakor said as a math teacher for 35 years in a small school, he has three comments to make. All students are not equipped in pre-calculus. Many would prefer to take classes in English or other subjects. Small schools would need to hire an extra halftime teacher to fulfill these requirements. All students should have access to courses and that would not happen with this bill. Students and their parents should chart their high school career based on their goals. The academically talented are already doing it. We are not yet ready for an academic mandate of this nature. This is the future. SB 2200 has to get worked through and some of the small to medium sized schools need to get their financial situations put in order before we are ready for this bill.

Representative Meier said she would like to see the Governor's Commission do their interim study before we look at setting course requirements. We need to look at adequacy within small and large school districts. Large school districts could probably deliver these programs now but smaller school districts probably would not be able to deliver.

Senator Flakoll said some of that discussion would be in the traditional sense. We could use the Division of Independent Study or electronic means of course delivery. The Senate had a concern for what is better for the student, that they take a class in high school where it is paid for by the tax payers or they take a remedial class or series of classes in college that cost \$5000 - \$8000 for something they should have achieved in high school. That is the major point that drew the P16 committee to this discussion. We are cheating the students. Some of the more academically aggressive students may take four years of math but the data still shows later on, there are still some not achieving at the level we want them to. We should also look at discussing equivalents, we could all agree on that. This should be explored by Department of Public Instruction, that would be in keeping with the intent of the legislature. An example is ruminant nutrition is very scientific in nature even though it is not a traditional biology course. North Dakota Studies is another example that we passed this session, and how we wished to have that handled. It is an example of an equivalent, it would count as a social studies.

Representative Meier said Senator Flakoll touched on some good points. She is concerned with what would be deemed acceptable. When they are looking at sciences, would agriculture be considered a science? Have Department of Public Instruction and Higher Education come together yet to decide what is acceptable?

Representative Wall said he agrees with Senator Flakoll. We need to see what courses we can substitute and align with math and science to include vocational agriculture, health services, and construction technology. An adequacy study is the point where we can do this to align content and achievement standards. This is premature. He has no problem with the idea.

Senator Gary Lee said he is concerned that we continue to wait. The other day someone asked the question about the non-public schools, how they view this. He talked to their representative and was told they have no problem with it, they are doing it already. If we look around the world at what is happening, do we continue to wait while they advance themselves in terms of academic excellence? If we wait until 2014, that is almost a generation of kids that has gone through the school before we do anything. How long do we wait?

Representative Wall said he doesn't think this is a stalling tactic. It needs a lot of study. An unfunded mandate is problematic. The administrators in his schools are not happy with it because they are offering it to students now. A lot of the emails he has received say that parents do not like it because they fear their students will drop out if they are forced to take more math and science. The JPA's better have alternative high schools set up because drop out rates are going to skyrocket. That is not what we want to do.

Senator Flakoll said he thinks everyone has received an email from Mike Hillman, North Dakota University System, talking about this. He says most people think kids drop out of high school because they are not doing well academically but a January, 2007 report indicates the major reason they drop out is because they feel their classes are uninteresting and irrelevant. In other words, they are not being appropriately challenged. (copy of email attached) The state has a constitutional obligation to provide a basic core academic requirement, more so than any other constitutional obligation. He truly believes kids in one locale should have similar educational opportunities for a core curriculum. He also believes if a school district wishes to tax themselves at a higher level and the patrons agree to provide additional coursework, that is ok.

Senator Taylor said the "or equivalent" will take more time but he doesn't want to stall either because he wants to have high expectations. People generally reach the expectations you

have for them. He was not involved with the P16 commission but he expects a lot of their work will be used by the Governor's Commission's adequacy study. We can validate some of the work of the P16 commission by including this curriculum in the bill and extending the time line so we have two years to discover what the equivalents are. It may result in different tracks, college bound, trade school bound which he did not like initially. Money wise it will be important for all schools for the state to decide if they are responsible for it and everything beyond it will be a local option. It could change but we could at least set the goal out there. Representative Meier said those points are well taken. Rather than put the cart before the horse, she would rather see the study happen and see where we are and then put into law what is deemed adequate.

Representative Wall said they heard in testimony, from Mr. Kutzer, about a Michigan plan where they did substitutions. That has a lot of merit as far as selling it to the public. Simply mandating it without doing the substitutions will cause a terrible problem with constituents in much of the state. It needs further study and the place for it is the adequacy study. We have plenty of vehicles to study it and get something ready for the general population so they will accept it.

Senator Flakoll asked how you reconcile that with the P16 committee. They met monthly to come up with these requirements. It is a more consistent and rigorous platform than an interim study where they meet 3 or 4 times over 18 months. Will they come up with anything different? He concedes not everyone was in full agreement with the requirements the P16 committee came up with. He was more in favor of offering options so a student could choose a science option or a math option in the fourth year. He attended a small school, years ago where they had 34 kids in the whole high school and they had the option of 4 years of math.

Representative Hunsakor said it seems like students who are academically talented, those who have the ability and the interest to go on in math and science are doing it now. He has a problem, at least until we get some other courses that could work for math, with lumping those bottom half, lower quartile students into a required 4 years of math. They have other interests, they have other abilities. Why do we want to create problems for them. Two years of math is enough for that group.

Senator Gary Lee said the course offerings come from the P16 group, a group of teachers, higher ed, business people, legislators, Department of Public Instruction. They spent a year and decided this is necessary. What else are we going to study? We will come up with a similar concept to what we have right here. Could we put some of this in and then have the study on going in terms of equivalencies? We are still looking at 8 – 10 years away. What are we afraid of?

Representative Meier said the financial impact is important. We need to determine where those small schools are sitting. When Department of Public Instruction and Higher Education get together and decide what courses are going to count are those courses being taught now in the smaller schools and what will the financial impact be and where does the state fit in all of this? With the Governor's Commission and the P16 study we could determine where those financial impacts would be and come together with a little better plan than what we have before us now.

Representative Hunsakor said we have quite a few open ended things now including 2200 and how that plays out. We would be in a better position two years from now to consider something like this. It is not on solid ground now.

Representative Wall said this has been studied by P16 and should continue to be when we look at adequacy. Is the role of K12 to expose kids to a wide curriculum, explore many things

or are do we want to channel students into a particular area? If that is the case, is it clear why? Are we trying to accomplish less remedial work? This is a shift. There is a major difference in offering the classes and requiring them. Are we trying to use a cookie cutter approach?

Senator Flakoll asked if the recent change in the requirements of highly qualified change the dynamics as we move forward with this. Some are having to shore up some things. With respect to channeling, it is a good thing. Getting back to who are we competing with, China and India are killing us. We are not competing with Minnesota, we are competing with Beijing. We have a fair amount of flexibility within the schedule, electives would be 5 – 7 units, or about 1.25 – 2 per year. He continues to have a concern about the senior year that is not very productive for many students. Some of this comes down to equivalency language which is going to be an important issue as we move forward. He doesn't think any member disagrees that we need to have some things in place and some equivalencies and some classes are just as important that may not be traditionally thought of as math or science.

Representative Hunsakor said when talking about competition with China, our kids who academically strong are already are doing all the math and science that is available in their schools. We have that group of people that can compete.

Senator Gary Lee said the committee will have to meet again, there is another conference committee scheduled now for the room. Senator Gary Lee adjourned the meeting of the conference committee.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

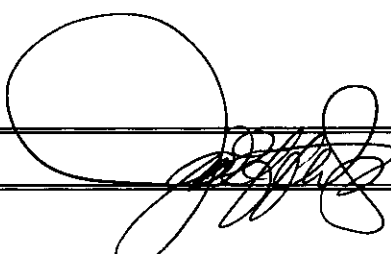
Senate Education Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: April 6, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 5795

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Senator Gary Lee opened the meeting of the conference committee on SB 2309. All members were present. (the meeting starts at meter 23:22)

Senator Flakoll distributed amendment .0204 and a "marked up" copy of the bill. (attached)

This has been changed from admission requirements for higher education to requirements for graduation from high school. It has been watered down with a fire hose and is not as stringent. Starting with the second year of the biennium it will require 4 units of English language arts, 2 units of math, 2 units of science, 3 units of social studies or multi cultural studies which may include North Dakota Studies, 1 unit of phy ed which may include up to ½ unit of Health (the marked up copy has an error here, it should say Health on page 2 line 2) one year of foreign language, Native American language, fine arts or career technical education. The other provision is the Superintendent of Public Instruction will identify courses that will meet these requirements. This will move us baby steps. It will accomplish two things. It will put into law for the first time, some very minimal requirements for graduation. In discussing with others and researching other states, some of which are more rigorous than others, he doesn't think this will cause angst across the state. We will have something in the code to react to and build on in the future. Secondly and just as important if not more important, as we move toward

more rigorous requirements, this will help us establish early on some of the things that will qualify for a math or a science so we will have started that progress. In visiting with others, if we have that in place, there may be fewer concerns as we move forward. It will be beneficial if we collect graduation requirements from each of the school districts so we have that as a basis of data as we moved forward. In doing research he found a very good print out from Iowa, it was in the Des Moines Register with each school district and their graduation requirements. If we have that, we can start making progress. This is a very low threshold, 13 units now and eventually we will get to 24 by the 2011 – 2012 school year. Only a marginal portion of them will be required core offerings. It is an important step in that it starts to establish core requirements across the state of North Dakota. It has some merit in terms of constitutionality in providing a uniform system of education, uniformly moderate, he allowed, but uniform none the less. Is it where we would like to have everyone? No. He thinks everyone would like to have this threshold higher. There are things that will be in place with 2200 so when we address adequacy in the future.... There are efforts that have moved us light years in the last 10 years in terms of course delivery – electronic, interactive, online, Division of Independent Studies,, JPA's. There are a number of things that will allow us to aggressively move up the bar. We could get to a point where once we have established this, the original bill didn't start until 2014, so we could still get there in a similar year and a similar fashion. It may be best if everyone has a chance to ruminate on this rather than have a motion today. There is some concern that if we deviate significantly from what the House sent over to us, they have a feeling it may get whacked over there. It is an easy carry; we are putting into law what is in practice. It won't start until the second year of the biennium.

Representative Meier said it is a good start. She was surprised to learn it is not in code already.

Representative Wall asked if on page 2, line 2, is it clear what we are asking the Superintendent of Public Instruction to do? We don't simply want a list of the various math offerings. We want courses that could substitute or potentially substitute for a math offering as we go down the road.

Senator Gary Lee asked Anita Decker to answer how Department of Public Instruction would deal with this.

Anita Decker said off the top of her head she would gather a group of math teachers and teachers of related courses, electronics for example and determine the math competencies in various courses and how that would translate into a math equivalency.

Senator Gary Lee said the committee's interest would be that these courses could be in lieu of typical math courses that we know today. Would the language in the bill help them identify that kind of product?

Dr. Decker said she could do that.

Representative Wall said he is satisfied if the intent is clear with Department of Public Instruction. We are looking for more than a list of existing math classes. We are looking to the future, after the adequacy study and after we add to the requirements we want to know what to substitute.

Senator Taylor said the identification of substitutes is a little preliminary when the threshold is so low. Can we look to the future?

Dr. Decker said she hasn't had time to think about it but she thinks they could do that by using teachers. She will have to do a lot of research on this. Could an electronics course equal half a math unit? She will have to take a look at it.

Senator Gary Lee asked if Senator Taylor's question was about going above and beyond the two units required in the amendment, refers to planning ahead.

Senator Taylor said yes, when we are only requiring two units it will probably be Algebra 1 and II or Geometry. There is not a real drive to identify other tracks at two units.

Senator Flakoll said a lot of this is future driven. There may be some exceptions. Foreign and Native American language for example, we may need to identify what will qualify, in areas where it is a little less standardized. If we wish to move the ball in the future, we want to have it ready. The other thing is many high schools have much more rigorous requirements than these and the legislative intent is not that they seek the lowest threshold that they can find. He would expect them to continue with their higher requirements. He would assume they won't sink down to reach this new plateau. There are no requirements in law now and this is a change but it is important to get the legislative intent on the record for school districts not to make their requirements any less than they are today.

Representative Hunskor said if this becomes law, we all know we want the threshold higher, there should be some public relations work done so the public realizes that.

Senator Flakoll said we could add additional language that there could be no less rigorous graduation requirements than what were in place for the 2006 – 2007 school year.

Representative Meier said we could refer to these as minimum high school graduation requirements. Those students aspiring to go on to college will look to having more math and science credits.

Representative Wall said he is not sure we need to say anything; he trusts that school districts and parents are concerned about their students' welfare. They won't go backwards. They won't fire math and science teachers and hire a bevy of art teachers.

Senator Flakoll said if we added language that a school district can't lower their standards over what exists today, is anyone opposed to that? A reorganized district is a consideration. It should be a safe amendment.

Representative Hunsakor said on page 1, line 19 we could add as statement about beginning the process to align with the recommendations of the P16 commission. Would that explain why we are doing this?

Senator Flakoll asked about meeting the requirements currently in place and language options and asked Anita Thomas to answer some questions.

Anita Thomas said if there is any confusion about the number of units currently required we would want to be sure we have language to clarify that. We could reference the number of units that are required now and say of those units, we would have to meet the requirements in the amendment.

Representative Hunsakor confirmed that page 1 line 23, 2 units of math could be general math and consumer math. On page 2, the ½ unit of North Dakota Studies could count in the 3 social studies units.

Senator Flakoll said that is his impression and he noted Dr. Decker is nodding her head.

Senator Gary Lee said this gives us something to react to over the weekend and we will meet again. He adjourned the meeting of the conference committee.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. SB 2309

Senate Education Committee

☒ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: April 12, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 5938

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

Senator Gary Lee opened the conference committee on SB 2309. All members were present.

Senator Flakoll presented written amendments (.0205) with the intent that they would reflect the changes that were handed out in the red copy dated Friday, April 6. These amendments would not be requirements for admission for higher education in North Dakota, they would be graduation requirements. The effective date on page 1, line 19 was changed from 2012-2013 to 2008-2009 because we are putting into place what is currently being done by the schools. We did not think that was an overly rigorous obligation. The issues that have drawn the most discussion are the change from "years" to "units", four units of English language arts, two units of mathematics, two units of science, three units of social studies or multicultural studies, one unit of physical education which may include up to one half unit of health which is found on page 2, line 2. We essentially overstruck the language as shown in the red copy. There is also a provision that the Superintendent of Public Instruction will work with each school district to determine what course offerings would fit within those requirements (meter 03:00).

Examples followed. Provision number three is that each school files their graduation requirements with the Department of Public Instruction (meter 03:46). The more information

we have, the better we know what changes to make. Provision number four states that a

school district may not reduce its graduation requirements below those in existence on June 30, 2007. The committee did not want these rather meager graduation requirements to be something to shoot down towards. We tried to come up with something that would be palatable to the House. It gives a starting point to work from for future interim and future legislative sessions.

Representative Wall, referring to page 1, line 17 regarding "higher education admission requirements" being crossed out and line 20 "or to be admitted to an institution of higher education in the state" being crossed out, asked why those phrases were being omitted.

Senator Flakoll explained that the bill in its original form used those as higher education entrance requirements. There should not be such a low threshold for entrance requirements. This bill allows each campus to set its own threshold, some with noticeably more rigorous levels of attainment than this. Some require this in cooperation with a certain GPA in consideration with their ACT test scores.

Representative Wall stated that he has a concern about what they are really saying. Are we saying these are the minimal requirements but they do not qualify you to go to college?

Senator Flakoll stated that the bill gives requirements for graduation from high school. It is silent on the issue of whether that automatically makes you eligible for entrance into a higher education institution. It does not say that you will or will not be admitted. Each institution has its own thresholds. This in no way guarantees you admission to a campus in the North Dakota University System.

Representative Hunsakor referred to the .0205 amendments compared to the Friday, April 6 version and asked if item #2 in red on Friday, April 6 is exactly identical to what is on .0205.

Senator Flakoll stated that they are the same. The intent is that that would be the same.

Representative Hunsakor referred to item #3 and item #4 on .0205 and asked if the intent was for that to be part of the amendment because it is not on Friday, April 6 (meter 09:21). Why is it not there?

Senator Flakoll stated that those were items that we believe will help us move the process. We are at the stage now where we do not have a quick access to the graduation requirements by school district. That will help us in further discussions. The other one is from the discussions of not setting the bar so that those who have more rigorous graduation requirements migrate down towards this lower level.

Representative Hunsakor asked again if it was intended for three and four to be part of the amendment.

Senator Flakoll answered yes.

Representative Meier referred to the number three wording "before September 1" and asked about identifying a specific date or if it is fine to leave it as a general date.

Senator Flakoll stated that he felt that it was fine to leave it and not include a specific date. That gives them some flexibility. Some of the people who will be generating these reports are the same people that may have to generate the data on teacher salary and compensation. They will likely be able to set up a template and use it every year.

Representative Wall referred to page 2, item #2 replacing lines 5-14 and expressed concern (meter 12:01). The question has to do with how to handle that. Because we are talking about substitutions, Career and Technical Education people should be included in here to reconcile courses. They have the standards and could be very helpful in determining and working together with the Department of Public Instruction. Would that have to be in code? How would that be done?

Senator Flakoll noted a sidebar meeting with Anita Thomas and she said that this is broad enough to allow that to happen. The legislative intent would be that that would happen, unless someone feels otherwise.

Representative Wall asked for the record to show that the Career and Technical Education people are involved. They have done a lot of the ground work. They have and know the standards that we can judge against.

Representative Hunskor expressed appreciation for the Senate's efforts to come up with .0205. For the most part, four years of math for the small schools would create many heart aches. Amendment .0205 is much more acceptable; however, there is still a concern that we do not give the impression to our schools and across the state that this is watered down now.

At the same time, it is understandable to get started at an early stage in moving up the scale and setting the bar, putting our state in a situation where we are requiring our young people to excel.

Senator Flakoll moved that the House recede from its amendments as printed on pages 897-898 of the Senate Journal and page 1003 of the House Journal and that Engrossed SB 2039 be amended as follows with the .0205 amendments.

Representative Meier seconded the motion.

No further discussion.

Roll call vote was taken. Motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Gary Lee adjourned the meeting of the conference committee.

2007 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2309

Senate Education Committee

☒ Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: April 19, 2007

Recorder Job Number: 6161 (mike did not work)

Committee Clerk Signature

Minutes:

Senator Gary Lee opened the meeting of the conference committee on SB 2309. All members were present.

Representative Meier distributed amendment .0208. She said a week ago there was a lengthy debate on the House floor on the amendment to 2309. On page 2 of the bill it says 3 units of social studies or multicultural studies. One member felt strongly we should take another look and she agreed. She has since learned that only one multicultural study course is offered in the state. It is Area Studies. The tribes use it a lot. The amendment states 3 units of social studies which may include ½ unit of North Dakota studies and ½ unit of multi cultural studies. Representative Hunsakor added they do not want a student to be able to take 3 years of multi cultural studies with no history or social studies. Now only one tribal school has multi cultural studies but that could change in the future.

Representative Meier said that is the crux of the debate.

Representative Meier moved amendment .0208, seconded by Senator Flakoll.

The motion passed 6-0-0.

Senator Gary Lee dissolved the conference committee.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2309

That the House recede from its amendments as printed on pages 897 and 898 of the Senate Journal and page 1030 of the House Journal and that Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2309 be amended as follows:

Page 1, line 17, remove "Higher education admission".

Page 1, line 18, remove "requirements".

Page 1, line 19, replace "2012-13" with "2008-09".

Page 1, line 20, remove "or be admitted to an institution of higher education in this state".

Page 1, line 22, replace "years" with "units".

Page 1, line 23, replace "Three years" with "Two units".

Page 1, line 24, replace "Three years" with "Two units".

Page 2, line 1, replace "years" with "units" and after "studies" insert ", which may include North Dakota studies".

Page 2, line 2, replace "year" with "unit" and after "education" insert ", which may include up to one-half unit of health".

Page 2, line 3, replace "year" with "unit".

Page 2, replace lines 5 through 14 with:

"2. The superintendent of public instruction shall work with each school district to identify course offerings that meet the requirements of subdivisions a through f of subsection 1."

Renumber accordingly

April 12, 2007

JB
4-12-07

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2309

That the House recede from its amendments as printed on pages 897 and 898 of the Senate Journal and page 1030 of the House Journal and that Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2309 be amended as follows:

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Page 1, line 19, replace "2012-13" with "2008-09"

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Page 1, line 22, replace "years" with "units"

Page 1, line 23, replace "Three years" with "Two units"

Page 1, line 24, replace "Three years" with "Two units"

Page 2, line 1, replace "years" with "units" and after the second "studies" insert ", which may include North Dakota studies"

Page 2, line 2, replace "year" with "unit" and after "education" insert ", which may include up to one-half unit of health"

Page 2, line 3, replace "year" with "unit"

Page 2, replace lines 5 through 14 with:

- "2. The superintendent of public instruction shall work with each school district to identify course offerings that meet the requirements of subdivisions a through f of subsection 1.
3. Before September first of each year, each school district shall file a copy of its graduation requirements with the superintendent of public instruction.
4. A school district may not reduce its graduation requirements below those in existence on June 30, 2007."

Renumber accordingly

Date: 4/12/07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

Senate Conference Committee Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken amendment . 0205 as below

Motion Made By Sen. Flakoll Seconded By Rep. Meier

Senators	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Senator Gary Lee	✓		Representative Meier	✓	
Senator Flakoll	✓		Representative Wall	✓	
Senator Taylor	✓		Representative Hunkor	✓	

Total (Yes) 6 "Click here to type Yes" No 0 "Click here to type No Votes"

Absent 0

Floor Assignment "Click here to type Floor Assignment"

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

House recede from amendments on pg. 897-898 of House Journal and pg 1003 of Senate Journal and adopt amendment .0205

REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

SB 2309, as engrossed: Your conference committee (Sens. G. Lee, Flakoll, Taylor and Reps. L. Meier, Wall, Hunsakor) recommends that the **HOUSE RECEDE** from the House amendments on SJ pages 897-898, adopt amendments as follows, and place SB 2309 on the Seventh order:

That the House recede from its amendments as printed on pages 897 and 898 of the Senate Journal and page 1030 of the House Journal and that Engrossed Senate Bill No. 2309 be amended as follows:

Page 1, line 17, remove "Higher education admission"

Page 1, line 18, remove "requirements"

Page 1, line 19, replace "2012-13" with
"2008-09"

Page 1, line 20, remove "or be admitted to an institution of higher education in this state"

Page 1, line 22, replace "years" with "units"

Page 1, line 23, replace "Three years" with "Two units"

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Page 2, line 1, replace "years" with "units" and after the second "studies" insert ", which may include North Dakota studies"

Page 2, line 2, replace "year" with "unit" and after "education" insert ", which may include up to one-half unit of health"

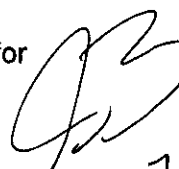
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Page 2, replace lines 5 through 14 with:

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3. Before September first of each year, each school district shall file a copy of its graduation requirements with the superintendent of public instruction.
4. A school district may not reduce its graduation requirements below those in existence on June 30, 2007.

Renumber accordingly

Engrossed SB 2309 was placed on the Seventh order of business on the calendar.


4-19-07

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2309

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Page 2, line 3, replace "year" with "unit"

Page 2, replace lines 5 through 14 with:

- "2. The superintendent of public instruction shall work with each school district to identify course offerings that meet the requirements of subdivisions a through f of subsection 1.
3. Before September first of each year, each school district shall file a copy of its graduation requirements with the superintendent of public instruction.
4. A school district may not reduce its graduation requirements below those in existence on June 30, 2007."

Renumber accordingly

Date: 4/19/07
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2007 SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2309

Senate Conference Committee Committee

☐ Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken amendment .0208

Motion Made By Rep. Meier Seconded By Sen. Flakoll

Senators	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Senator Gary Lee	✓		Representative Meier	✓	
Senator Flakoll	✓		Representative Wall	✓	
Senator Taylor	✓		Representative Hunksor	✓	

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

SB 2309, as engrossed: Your conference committee (Sens. G. Lee, Flakoll, Taylor and Reps. L. Meier, Wall, Hunsakor) recommends that the **HOUSE RECEDE** from the House amendments on SJ pages 897-898, adopt amendments as follows, and place SB 2309 on the Seventh order:

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3. Before September first of each year, each school district shall file a copy of its graduation requirements with the superintendent of public instruction.
4. A school district may not reduce its graduation requirements below those in existence on June 30, 2007.

Renumber accordingly

Engrossed SB 2309 was placed on the Seventh order of business on the calendar.

2007 TESTIMONY

SB 2309

Position of SBHE Regarding P-16

Adopted October 16, 2006

State Law 15.1-01-02 requires the four state level Boards of education in North Dakota to work together in coordinating the state's preschool through college education system. As part of this effort the boards jointly appointed a task force of leading educators, administrators and students, in partnership with 8 representatives of the State Chamber of Commerce to review the current education system in place in North Dakota and to recommend appropriate improvements. The Education Task Force, reaching unanimous consensus, has concluded that the state education system, although operating from a strong foundation, has need for systematic improvement, especially in light of improvements now occurring in other states. The Boards have jointly accepted and endorsed the task force report. The SBHE commends the Task Force for its intense and thoughtful effort in bringing back a comprehensive plan with suggested goals and strategies for education adequacy for all North Dakota students. The SBHE supports the report goals and recommendations and, given the importance to the state's future, encourages implementation of the recommendations in as timely manner as possible.

2309
Mike Hellm.

NORTH DAKOTA JOINT BOARDS OF EDUCATION

November 13, 2006

**Career and
Technical Education/
Department of
Public Instruction**
Darrel A. Remington

**Education Standards
and Practices Board**
Chris Douthit

**State Board of
Higher Education**
John Q. Paulsen

The Honorable John Hoeven
Governor
State of North Dakota
600 E Boulevard Ave
Bismarck ND 58505

Dear Governor Hoeven:

Thank you for the opportunity for the presidents of North Dakota's four boards of education to meet with you, Lt. Governor Dalrymple and Chief of Staff Goetz to discuss the Education Task Force (ETF) report and recommendations. Everyone in attendance at the meeting agreed that the work for the ETF coordinates very nicely with the work of the Education Commission chaired by Lt. Governor Dalrymple.

We understand that implementing the Education Commission's recommendations to address equity will be an important priority for the 2007 Legislative Session and that this will limit resources available for other initiatives. As we discussed at the meeting, we also would like to suggest the importance of small investments in two key areas that would create the basis for effective and efficient P-16 collaboration in the future. These areas are formally aligning education standards across the state education system and creating the basis for a P-16 longitudinal data system that can also interact with other state agency data.

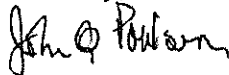
As Dr. Paul Johnson, Superintendent of Schools in Bismarck, explained to the State Board of Higher Education in October, a large disconnect has developed between the high school curriculum and expectations for college level preparation. Without a formal mechanism to align expectations across state education sectors, the disconnect between the high school curriculum and preparation for college and work will continue to grow. Aligning expectations and standards through the work of an alignment commission working under the Joint Boards was a top priority of the ETF and one that, although it would need some resources, would not need a large amount of resources to initiate. In its future discussions the Education Commission is likely to conclude, as the ETF concluded, that defining education adequacy will require an ongoing effort to define curriculum and outcome standards and the assessments of those standards. Beginning the work of the alignment commission now will help to build the consensus necessary for long term meaningful change. As Lt. Governor Dalrymple explained, if there is an expectation, in this case an expectation of alignment, it should be stated in the law. Alignment expectations would be a logical Joint Boards assignment given the expectations for Joint Board coordination currently in the law.

Letter to Governor Hoeven
November 13, 2006
Page 2

As you know, there are several important discussions underway related to the future of the state data systems. The state has recently initiated a state data warehouse discussion, the ongoing FINDET operation recently had a formal consultant review and several initiatives have been suggested by the Economic Development committee. We fully support your desire for all agencies to be working together in the development of a single long range strategy for data coordination and that we do this correctly one time without going through multiple disconnected efforts. We recognize the state need to adopt data definitions that are common across sectors and that articulate to produce meaningful management information. Because the requirements of federal law (Family Education Rights and Privacy Act) limiting the sharing of education agency data we encourage you to look at the collaborative FINDET operation as a unifying element in this discussion, and that FINDET continue to be located in an education agency. This is another area where we feel the investment of a small amount of resources will result in long term efficiencies and benefits.

We look forward to working closely with you during the legislative session to move your education agenda forward. While we will continue to provide support as individual state agencies we now feel that, working together, we can bring the additional focus of the Joint Boards in support of the ETF recommendations and P-16 efforts. Please let us know if you would like any additional information on the issues discussed above.

Sincerely,



John Q. Paulsen
President, SBHE

Wayne Sanstead
Superintendent, DPI

Wayne Kutzer
Director, CTE

xc: Lt Governor Dalrymple
Bill Goetz
Chancellor Eddie Dunn

- Enhance their academic achievement by linking classroom studies to future choices,
- Achieve skills they will need to transition successfully to post-secondary education and work, and
- Develop the skills needed to make informed decisions throughout life.

Strategies in Priority Order (Because several task force Goals and Strategies overlap, it seemed logical for the Task Force members to take all Strategies developed separately for each of the four Goals and prioritize them in one group as follows: (See Appendix D for Goals and Strategies listed separately)

1. **Graduation/Admissions Requirements:** While these standards may need to be increased in the future, legislation should require that, by 2012, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards (see Goal 1, Strategy 7) set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, 1 year of a foreign or Native American language or 1 year of either career and technical education or fine arts. By 2014, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 4 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, and 2 years of foreign or Native American language or 2 years of career and technical education or 2 years of fine arts. It is essential to note that, as these standards for a minimum curriculum are developed, how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency (see Goal 1) will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting "standards." The standards and assessments need to acknowledge that taking certain courses, such as language arts/reading and math, each year of high school is necessary but that obtaining foreign language "credits or equivalent learning experience" may be more beneficial in pre-high school years. Also, there is a strongly expressed preference for taking subjects in world and US history and culture—e.g., "multi-cultural studies."
2. **Ensuring Proficiency:** The system created by the Joint Boards must, within eight years, provide that high school graduates have sufficient skills, knowledge and abilities to ensure success in a post-secondary education institution and preparedness for employment and citizenship. P-12 formative assessments, with clear feedback regarding levels of performance and appropriate interventions if needed for individual students, will be in place within the same time frame. It is understood that significant additional state funding will be required to develop this kind of system and other strategies being recommended, that unfunded mandates are very difficult for school districts and that a balance of new state resources, changes in allocation of current school district resources and other creative and innovative solutions such as those that may be provided through educational associations

Final Report of the P-16 Education Task Force To the Joint Boards (See Glossary, Appendix A)

The P-16 Education Task Force Mandate

North Dakotans have always, justifiably, taken great pride in their education system. They have come to take for granted that the education provided in the State is of high quality, and some even suggest it is "second to none." North Dakota has the second highest rate of high school graduation in the country. The highest percentage in the country of its high school graduates go on to post-secondary education. In a variety of state, regional and national assessments, North Dakota elementary students, in particular, are highly ranked.

But cracks are appearing, and some North Dakota students are falling through them. The North Dakota Joint Boards of education (Joint Boards), consisting of the state board of public school education, the state board of higher education, the education standards and practices board, and the state board for career and technical education, are mandated by law to:

1. Coordinate elementary and secondary education programs, career and technical education programs, and higher education programs.
2. Cooperate in the provision of professional growth and development opportunities for elementary and secondary teachers and administrators.
3. Ensure cooperation in any other jointly beneficial project or program.

In conforming to these requirements, in September of 2005, the Joint Boards agreed to form a P-16 Education Task Force (Task Force). The stated objectives for this Task Force were to develop agreements on:

- Aligning outcomes and standards, assessments and curriculum,
- Linking data systems and developing a statewide P-16 student diagnostic information system to provide feedback to students and local schools for improvement,
- Communicating with the public about the urgent nature of the concerns in education and receiving information about public expectations about what is required to succeed in post-secondary education and the 21st Century workforce,
- Facilitating good student career choices in innovative ways,
- Enhancing educator preparation and training,
- Implementing best practices from other states,
- Determining the adequacy of resources, and
- Providing a safety net for dropouts and non-traditional students.

In all of these efforts, consideration should be given to the unique needs of American Indian students who represent approximately 10% (and a continually increasing percent) of the student population in North Dakota. Where appropriate interventions and assistance have been provided, significant gains have been seen among American Indian students, for example, in adequate

yearly progress (AYP) as assessed pursuant to the provisions of the federal No Child Left Behind legislation.

To meet this mandate, the Joint Boards invited a diverse group of 38 North Dakotans to participate in a nine-month effort to determine the primary issues relative to education in North Dakota and to develop agreements on how to address them. They have met 9 times in 9 months for full-day and longer sessions, and the Task Force selected a Steering Committee to assist with the process, which has also met 9 times following each Task Force meeting. The list of Task Force members is attached. (See Appendix B)

The Status of Education in North Dakota

Perhaps the most significant accomplishment of the Task Force members was their own learning about education issues and needs in North Dakota and spreading the word to their respective constituencies. At its first meeting, the Task Force heard from Janis Somerville, Director of the National Association of System Heads/Education Trust State P-16 Partnership, who told the members: "North Dakota has many good things going for it, but there are definite areas that require attention, and other states are catching up with and surpassing North Dakota. The basic story in North Dakota is one of students gaining a great deal of traction through 4th grade and then not demonstrating much additional traction through high school and into higher education." In order to address this problem, she added, careful, well planned, collaborative and bold action is needed.

In response to Janis' comments and Task Force members' discussion, at the first meeting, a Task Force member commented and asked: "Nationally, we have the highest-ranking raw material coming into our classrooms. The raw material is the best there is, but, in the end, we do not have the best product. What are we adding and not adding, and what impacts are we having or not having?"

During each of its succeeding meetings, Task Force members heard from, among others, representatives of the ACT and SAT, the National Governors Association, a South Dakota State Senator, North Dakota school administrators, teachers and counselors, the Midwest Higher Education Compact (MHEC), the Executive Director of Job Service North Dakota and the Executive Director of the Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals. Task Force members have read countless reports on the current status of education in the State and nation. The messages, in general, to the Task Force from all of these presenters, reports and the media have been uniform:

- While some cohorts of North Dakota students are maintaining relatively high-test scores when compared to national averages, "slippage" is occurring.
- Many North Dakota students are not well prepared to go on to college or to enter the workforce after graduation from high school.
- A more rigorous curriculum must be implemented throughout the North Dakota education system, together with enhanced standards and expectations which all North Dakota students will be able to meet, given appropriate assistance and resources

- All North Dakota students can and will succeed in education and life if given the opportunity and assistance needed.
- Significantly more extensive and integrated data about student needs and achievement will be required in order to help all students succeed and to ensure that education institutions are held accountable.
- All levels of education in North Dakota must work closely together to ensure consistent standards and expectations and to help all students succeed.
- Through more intensive and extensive career and academic counseling, all North Dakota students need to be far better prepared for post-secondary education, work and life.
- North Dakota educators need more and better training to be able to provide a more rigorous curriculum, and they need to be treated as professionals and paid commensurate with their meeting increased expectations.
- The public must be informed and understand the challenges the education system faces and must be prepared for and supportive of significant change in the way education is delivered in North Dakota.
- While other states are gearing up their educational systems, North Dakota has continued to maintain the status quo, and it cannot afford to do so because it is now engaged, and will become far more engaged, in a highly competitive world economy.

While Task Force members may not have agreed with all they heard from presenters, examples of more specific information Task Force members received include presenters' and members' comments and excerpts from reading materials taken from meeting summaries, including:

- According to the National Governors Association (NGA) presenter, P-16/20 councils should identify areas of greatest potential impact and emphasize collaboration and cooperation with other efforts and partners. They should highlight what other states are doing that is successful and get advice from them. The P-16/20 movement is essential in order to bridge the gap between P-12 and post-secondary institutions. We have to begin at the same expectation baseline and bridge the two systems. They need to build strategies to improve the goals—increase high school graduation rates, college readiness, and college graduation. Higher education needs to say what it expects, then unify strategies to increase high school and college graduation rates.
- NGA's presenter also recommended that the Task Force should impact policy by setting statewide benchmarks for post-secondary attainment (ND is below the national average in what it currently requires schools to offer) and should develop strategies around numerical trends—e.g., remediation rates. He told the Task Force about innovations being implemented in other states:
 - Challenging curriculum—Do not narrowly define the curriculum. Allow for multiple pathways, including career/technical routes. Provide advanced placement and dual enrollment opportunities as early as possible, but they must be college level quality. Provide virtual school opportunities and audit core curriculums to be certain they are rigorous—based on student achievement and ACT types of audits.

- Assessment—Michigan will soon make the greatest use of the ACT test as a bridge/benchmark between secondary and post-secondary education. It will be used as a guide for post-secondary admission. Maryland will require end of course exams and proficiencies to determine levels of competency. There will be a joint assessment among New England states to determine education cost-effectiveness and efficiency and No Child Left Behind achievement.
- Emphasis on science, mathematics and technology—The Minnesota Governor is focusing on science, mathematics and technology, with emphasis on the quality of the courses and systems accountability.
- Quality P through graduate school—The Iowa Governor has charged a P-20 committee to focus on goals of 90% of students having a quality pre-school and Kindergarten experience and 90% of high school graduates completing at least 2 years of college.
- Mathematics and Science Magnet Schools—North Carolina has focused on expanding access to mathematics and science magnet schools and is having great success.
- Data Systems—Rhode Island has focused on data systems, and the Governor attends all meetings and stresses enhanced data systems and results. Florida is able to track students all the way from kindergarten into the workforce. Their data is clear, usable and accessible by the professionals at all levels, and the data is online for teachers for everyday use.
- Governance—Kentucky underwent a restructuring of the governance of its education system. Their colleges have focused on what they wanted to do well and have eliminated some programs, added other programs and built a data system to connect P-12 and higher education.
- When they committed to making significant changes in education, Michigan leaders took the approach that they would not get drawn into debates on the issues of "how it would be done," that this would be left to the professionals and those in the field. They determined what needs to be done, with a sense of urgency, and are now working on the details. Quoting from Theodore Roosevelt, the Michigan presenter told the Task Force, "See it. Believe it. Do it." The legislature, the funding and the "how" will follow. In Michigan, he said, they "get it:"
 - Michigan believes they will educate themselves out of their current economic difficulties.
 - A college-ready curriculum is needed for all students.
 - All students can succeed if it is expected of them.
 - We need to expect the same from all students, not just those in the upper 25% of students in classes.
 - Flexibility in how to teach is important, but we should not lose performance to the "tyranny of exceptions."

- According to a South Dakota State Senator, in his State, there was resistance to requiring a more rigorous curriculum. "Not a lot, but some." There are still some with the "good enough for grandpa" mindset. The State Board moved ahead and established the requirements in cooperation with higher education. Without the advanced diploma, students are not considered to be college-ready.
- North Dakota students are number 1 in the nation, in the percentage of students who graduate from high school and go on to post-secondary education, but drop to 38th in the nation in the percentage of students who graduate from two and four-year post-secondary education institutions within 3 and 6 years respectively. Approximately 28% of students in post-secondary education institutions in North Dakota (those educated in North Dakota and in other states and countries) need to take remediation classes in order to prepare them for credit courses. Dropout and remediation rates for American Indian students are higher and require a systemic response, geared toward their unique needs.
- North Dakota students' ACT scores have remained essentially flat for the last 15 years. For example, ACT composite scores in 2001 were 21.4. ACT composite scores in 2006 are 21.4, while composite scores nationally increased by .2 in 2006 alone. According to the ACT results of 2005, only 52% of North Dakota high school graduates were considered ready for college-level reading. And, in 2006, North Dakota students' ACT English test score results were again below the national average. According to this year's ACT scores, only 23% of North Dakota students are considered prepared for post-secondary education in all four ACT core areas tested—English, mathematics, reading and science.
- According to the 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report, while North Dakota's fourth and eighth grade students were above the national average in reading, mathematics and science, they are below the national average in writing.
- North Dakota requires the fewest number of student-teacher contact days per school year—173—in the nation. The average of all states is 180 student-teacher contact days. At least one state is at 186 days. Many foreign countries require well above 200 days.
- In Bismarck, North Dakota—students, parents, educators, and the public—told consultants to the Bismarck Public Schools:
 1. Stakeholders believe that the current course options may not result in an appropriate variety of experiences to develop students as well-rounded citizens.
 2. Stakeholders believe that students should be prepared to enter the world of work when they graduate.
 3. Stakeholders believe that students should be required to take more core subject courses.
 4. Stakeholders believe that students should be more proficient in communications skills, interpersonal skills, problem solving, critical thinking, and decision-making and should develop the capacity for life-long learning.
 5. Stakeholders believe that high school graduates need, but often do not demonstrate, proficiency in writing skills.

6. Stakeholders believe that physical education should provide students with life-long skills promoting physical fitness and a healthy lifestyle.
 7. Stakeholders believe that high school graduates should have a thorough understanding of personal finance, including investing, insurance, borrowing and credit.
 8. Stakeholders are supportive of the elimination of the graduation requirement for drivers' education.
- According to a Bismarck Public Schools administrator presenting at a Task Force meeting, "We have come to believe that some students who graduate have a 'fraudulent diploma'." He added, "We need to focus on setting graduation standards and students meeting the requirements, and we need to take the standards beyond proficiency. We need to identify exemplary standards and performance measurements. We need to examine the implication of course sequencing and how it assures proficiency based on college admission standards. We are not meeting the need to develop well-rounded students."
 - North Dakota Task Force members from the business community as well as the Executive Director of Job Service North Dakota repeatedly stressed the need for better-prepared employees for current and future jobs, with stronger basic skills such as in mathematics, communications, teamwork, analysis and problem solving.
 - American Indian members of the Task Force and panelists presented data and made recommendations relative to American Indian students. They noted that, while strides have been made, North Dakota schools continue to be challenged as evidenced by the following:
 - The majority of schools in need of improvement in North Dakota as determined by Title I, are schools with significant enrollments of American Indian students.
 - In North Dakota in 2000, of the 691 students taking the AP Exams, 4 were American Indian. In 2005, of the 993 students taking the AP exams in North Dakota, only 7 were American Indian.
 - This segment of North Dakotas' population will significantly impact the dependency ratio of the population of the state of North Dakota as they become future wage-earners in North Dakota, and American Indian graduates do not leave the state at the same ratio as mainstream graduates.
 - The Task Force should endorse the adoption of a policy of systemic representation through the creation of an Indian Education Advisory Council so that the North Dakota education community and professionals have a cadre of educators who can work on American Indian specific strategies designed to impact student achievement. As a part of the implementation of the P-16 Initiative, as legislation is considered, the Task Force should endorse the creation of American Indian specific legislation focused on strategies that will:

- Target schools with significant enrollments of American Indian learners,
- Provide focused professional development for teachers of Indian students on pedagogical and culturally-appropriate methodologies,
- Provide summer enrichment academies for students,
- Create college-bound cohorts of American Indian students from middle through high school to sustain student engagement through college entrance,
- Provide for career-path counseling and work-based experiences for both those who are post-secondary institution and work-bound,
- Support the endorsement of an American Indian Education Office within the North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission as the oversight office for establishing partnerships for coordination and monitoring of efforts associated with this initiative.

The Priority Issues

As a result of what they heard and discussions at the first meeting, the Task Force members identified and prioritized the top four issues, which it addressed for the next 8 meetings:

- The lack of alignment between expectations and standards in the pre-school through high school and the higher education systems,
- The need to develop a more rigorous, accessible core curriculum,
- The need to enhance recruiting and retention of quality teachers, and
- The need to enhance career and academic guidance for students.

It also identified two other top priority issues:

- The need to educate the public about the importance of identifying and correcting weaknesses in the North Dakota education system, and
- The need to seek new and reallocate current resources to accomplish these goals.

These latter two issues have been an ongoing discussion among the Task Force members. To date, the response of the Task Force to the need to educate the public has been a self-education process as well as education of key constituencies whom Task Force members represent, but the Task Force has had neither the resources nor the capacity to conduct significant public outreach beyond that. It has also begun to identify needed resources to accomplish the goals and strategies it has agreed upon, and Task Force members realize that many of the strategies adopted will require new resources for implementation.

The Principles

Task Force members developed and generally agreed upon (not full consensus on all Principles) the following "Principles" upon which to build goals and strategies:

1. To compete throughout their lives in the global marketplace, North Dakota students will require an education that is competitive on an international basis.
2. Maintaining North Dakota's current level of educational achievement is not acceptable.
3. The education system in North Dakota is being challenged by rising national and international standards, and these challenges will deepen unless significant changes are made in the near term.
4. Most students, parents, teachers, administrators, policy makers and members of the public are currently unaware of the national and international challenges and are unprepared to make/support the changes needed to deal with them.
5. Taking more rigorous courses, an expanded core curriculum, higher expectations, graduation proficiency requirements and alignment of proficiency standards throughout the education system in North Dakota are the foundation upon which significant educational progress for all North Dakota students can be built.
6. All North Dakota students must be included in achieving educational progress, their progress needs to be regularly assessed, and they need to be given regular feedback and provided with sufficient resources to make significant progress.
7. Proficiency standards for high school graduation in North Dakota are as applicable to students who go on to post-secondary education as they are to students who choose to enter the workforce after high school graduation, and they are essential to developing good citizens.
8. Proficiency standards for high school graduation should prepare students for college level work, including college algebra, English composition and science.
9. In order to achieve an internationally competitive education system, North Dakota must be able to attract and retain highly qualified and committed teachers and administrators.
10. Achieving the kind of positive educational outcomes needed for all North Dakota students will require North Dakota citizens to be fully committed over the long term to making the changes necessary to achieve and maintain an internationally competitive education system.

Resolution of Support

Based on what members of the Task Force had learned and the need to respond to the US Department of Education (DOE) relative to North Dakota students graduating from secondary schools with "rigorous curriculums" in order to qualify for new federal funding, while realizing their work was far from complete, on May 10, the Task Force members agreed to the following resolution to send to the US DOE:

North Dakota P-16 Task Force Resolution In Support of an Academic Competitiveness Grant Alternative Rigorous Curriculum

WHEREAS, the North Dakota P-16 Education Task Force, a joint initiative of the State Board for Public School Education, the State Board for Career and Technical Education, the Education Standards and Practices Board and the State Board of Higher Education, was established to align standards and create seamless transitions to college and work and enhance the rigor of all curricula offered in North Dakota schools;

WHEREAS, North Dakota P-16 Task Force members represent the four state level education boards, parents and students, P-16 educators and administrators, Native American educators, the Governor's office and the North Dakota business community;

WHEREAS, the North Dakota P-16 Task Force recognizes that Academic Competitiveness and SMART grants reward North Dakota's Federal Pell Grant eligible students who meet the rigorous curriculum requirements by providing additional grant funding to attend a postsecondary institution and therefore reduces the amount of money a student needs to borrow;

WHEREAS, the North Dakota P-16 Task Force has examined and supports the State Board of Higher Education's baccalaureate program admission policy standards, effective since 1991, as an interim alternative rigorous secondary school program of study for a new federal Academic Competitiveness Grant;

WHEREAS, only twenty-eight (28) of North Dakota's high schools do not currently offer foreign language instruction, but all North Dakota high schools, through newly created education cooperative Joint Powers Agreements, have the opportunity to offer foreign language instruction within the next two years, and the P-16 Education Task Force intends to recommend adding a foreign language to graduation requirements for those graduating from high school in four years (such a requirement is currently strongly recommended in the Board of Higher Education's baccalaureate program admission policy standards); and

WHEREAS, North Dakota is seeking this "alternative rigorous program" designation for one year only and intends to have in place after that a compulsory statewide curriculum that meets or exceeds US Department of Education requirements for a rigorous program.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the North Dakota P-16 Education Task Force supports the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction efforts in seeking U.S. Department of Education approval in defining an alternative rigorous secondary school curriculum based on

State Board of Higher Education baccalaureate admission policy for the Academic Competitiveness Grant for the 2006-2007 academic years.

P-16 Education Task Force Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategies

As a result of what they have discussed and learned over the last nine months, the Principles developed and the resolution conveyed to DOE, the Task Force members have developed and agreed upon the Task Force Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategies:

[Note: Throughout this summary of the P-16 Education Task Force Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategies, unless otherwise specified, all language applies to grades P through 16.]

The P-16 Education Task Force (ETF) identified its **Mission Statement**, its purpose, as:

The P-16 Education Task Force is committed to involving all essential stakeholders in an open, honest and respectful dialogue that will result in bold action to create the best possible, rigorous, seamless, uniform, efficient, and measurable education system for all students in North Dakota.

The **Vision Statement** developed by the ETF is:

All North Dakota students will be educated in an innovative, relevant, integrated and challenging system providing world-class quality to prepare them to be good citizens and to take full advantage of all opportunities available to them in their lives.

The four **Goals** developed by the ETF to accomplish its Mission and help achieve the Vision are:

Goal 1: North Dakota should put in place and enforce, throughout its P-16 education system, uniform, consistent proficiency expectations and standards and ensure that each student has a support system in place to enable the student to achieve proficiency. [This would mean an explicit move from "norm referenced" to "proficiency/competency" based standards.]

Goal 2: All North Dakota students should have equitable access to and the expectation of completing a rigorous core curriculum/standards taught by effective and highly qualified P-16 educators.

Goal 3: Top performing North Dakota students should be encouraged to become P-16 educators. North Dakota educators are professionals, their quality should be assured, and they should be paid accordingly, including receiving additional resources for professional development and for demonstrated improved performance.

Goal 4: North Dakota should provide academic and career assessment and counseling that is comprehensive, developmental and systematic from pre-school through post-secondary education and to employment and life, to help students:

- Enhance their academic achievement by linking classroom studies to future choices,
- Achieve skills they will need to transition successfully to post-secondary education and work, and
- Develop the skills needed to make informed decisions throughout life.

Strategies in Priority Order (Because several task force Goals and Strategies overlap, it seemed logical for the Task Force members to take all Strategies developed separately for each of the four Goals and prioritize them in one group as follows: (See Appendix D for Goals and Strategies listed separately)

1. **Graduation/Admissions Requirements:** While these standards may need to be increased in the future, legislation should require that, by 2012, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards (see Goal 1, Strategy 7) set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, 1 year of a foreign or Native American language or 1 year of either career and technical education or fine arts. By 2014, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 4 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, and 2 years of foreign or Native American language or 2 years of career and technical education or 2 years of fine arts. It is essential to note that, as these standards for a minimum curriculum are developed, how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency (see Goal 1) will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting "standards." The standards and assessments need to acknowledge that taking certain courses, such as language arts/reading and math, each year of high school is necessary but that obtaining foreign language "credits or equivalent learning experience" may be more beneficial in pre-high school years. Also, there is a strongly expressed preference for taking subjects in world and US history and culture—e.g., "multi-cultural studies."
2. **Ensuring Proficiency:** The system created by the Joint Boards must, within eight years, provide that high school graduates have sufficient skills, knowledge and abilities to ensure success in a post-secondary education institution and preparedness for employment and citizenship. P-12 formative assessments, with clear feedback regarding levels of performance and appropriate interventions if needed for individual students, will be in place within the same time frame. It is understood that significant additional state funding will be required to develop this kind of system and other strategies being recommended, that unfunded mandates are very difficult for school districts and that a balance of new state resources, changes in allocation of current school district resources and other creative and innovative solutions such as those that may be provided through educational associations

(Joint Powers Agreements) will be essential to developing a world class education system that will ensure success for all students.

3. **Data and Evaluation:** Legislation authorizing the Joint Boards to create a seamless education process throughout North Dakota's education system must include the requirement of the development, within three years, of a uniform, statewide methodology to follow and evaluate students and provide feedback to them throughout their matriculation in all North Dakota elementary, secondary and post-secondary education systems.
4. **Alignment Commission:** The Joint Boards must establish a select group of education leaders and employers, including American Indian, and other representatives in North Dakota, relying on content experts and staff and, delegate necessary authority to establish and align proficiency standards throughout the P-16 system on a continuing basis in order to enable changes in standards necessary to ensure that all students are well prepared for furthering their education, for work, for citizenship and for life. (See Appendix C)
5. **Full Day Kindergarten at Age 6:** Because brain research indicates that earlier learning is a critical time for developing and providing a sound basis for life-long learning, the legislature should provide full funding for all-day kindergarten and make kindergarten compulsory by age six.
6. **Core Areas:** The system created by the Joint Boards must, within eight years, ensure demonstrated student proficiency in four core areas (language arts/reading, math, science, and social/multi-cultural studies) in order to progress and to graduate from high school and post-secondary education.
7. **Increased Student-Teacher Contact Days:** In order to enhance the opportunity for greater teacher-student engagement, the North Dakota legislature should enact legislation to increase the minimum number of student-teacher contact days to 178 days for the 2009-10 school year and to 183 days for the 2012-13 school year.
8. **Additional Units:** In order to meet these enhanced standards and gain proficiency in core and other subject areas and meet the demands of a new higher technology and world economy, by 2009, students graduating from high school in North Dakota must have completed 22 units, and, by 2011, all students graduating from high school in North Dakota must have completed 24 units.
9. **Pilot Projects:** The 2007 legislative session should provide for several demonstration/pilot projects in small, medium and large school districts and public schools on American Indian reservations or education associations (Joint Powers Agreements) throughout North Dakota to develop different approaches for implementing more rigorous curriculums. Between sessions, the pilots should report on progress to an appropriate legislative interim committee and to the 2009 legislative session.
10. **Adequate Resources for All Students:** Legislation must provide for a process to generate the educational resources necessary to assist all students to meet proficiency standards.

11. **Authority:** The legislature must give the Joint Boards the authority to develop and implement/enforce uniform, consistent proficiency expectations and standards throughout the North Dakota P-16 education system.
12. **Comprehensive, Consistent Counseling Program:** By 2008, a state-funded PLAN ACT program, a common, consistent and comprehensive counseling program will be administered to all high school sophomore students in North Dakota. Other tools may also be utilized in addition to PLAN.
13. **Counselor/Student Ratios:** By 2009, state funding will provide for a sufficient number of counselors in each district to ensure a counselor/student ratio of 1/250 as recommended by the American School Counselor Association.
14. **Incentives for Current and Prospective Teachers:** Legislation enacted by the 2007 session should put in place an array of state sponsored scholarships, student loan reductions/forgiveness and other incentives for prospective proficient students and P-16 educators to utilize for all forms of professional development—i.e., to become P-16 educators or to enhance the abilities of P-16 educators. Such incentives should be a priority in high need/hard to fill areas.
15. **Improved Professional Development:** By 2008, the Joint Boards, through their professional staffs, will develop an improved P-16 educator professional development system, including mentorships, designed to enhance and continuously improve teaching practice, content knowledge and proficiency, especially in language arts/reading, mathematics, social/multi-cultural studies and science.
16. **Educator Salaries at the National Average:** Assuming a steady increase in curriculum rigor and student proficiency, a model(s) selected by 2011, based on pilot outcomes, will ensure that, by 2014, demonstrated proficient P-16 educators' average salary and benefits will meet or exceed the national average, factoring in costs of living, and will remain at those levels as long as rigor and proficiency continue to increase.
17. **Pilot Projects on Linking Increased Proficiency/Educator Pay:** Incentives provided by the 2007 North Dakota legislative assembly should provide for pilot projects at all levels of education in North Dakota to develop models to demonstrate alternative methods of determining when and how improved rigor of curriculums and student proficiency occur (see Goals 1 and 2) and to develop alternative models for increasing salary and benefits of North Dakota P-16 educators commensurate with the demonstrated rate of improvement in curriculum rigor and student proficiency.
18. **All Students Assessed:** By 2007, all students, when they enter the North Dakota education system anywhere along their K-12 education path, will be thoroughly assessed by a school counselor or other educators for level of academic and career abilities and interests.

19. **Individual Student Academic/Career Plans:** Counselors and educators will utilize such assessments to help students develop individual student academic and career plans which will be reviewed annually with teachers and parents/guardians to determine appropriate education needs and paths for each student.
20. **Integrating Career Development in Instruction:** Educators and counselors will be provided with the knowledge and skills to integrate career development competencies with the standards and benchmarks of their current instructional program.
21. **Academies:** Academies should be developed and fostered throughout the State through partnerships between all levels of education and the private sector to include languages and other subjects such as fine arts, music, career and technical education, internships and remediation opportunities that would allow all students in the State to have the opportunity to attend school year-round.
22. **Incentives for Degrees/Certification:** Incentives enacted by the 2007 North Dakota legislature to P-16 educators for assistance in and increased salary and benefits for obtaining an Advanced Degree and/or National Board Certification will ensure that North Dakota begins to increase its numbers of P-16 educators with Advanced Degrees and/or National Board Certification by at least 5% per year by 2009.
23. **Development of Legislation:** ETF and Consensus Council Staff will work with ETF member legislators and other interested legislators/Legislative Council staff to develop a draft of such authorizing legislation by June 30, 2006. (See Appendix C)
24. **Educator Appreciation:** The Governor, legislature, each community and every school district and campus should declare the first full week of May of each year as North Dakota Educator Appreciation Week and the first Tuesday of that week as North Dakota's Educator Day, dedicated to celebrating, recognizing, recruiting, encouraging and rewarding educators and potential educators.
25. **Recruiting New Educators:** Educators at all levels of education in North Dakota should actively recruit the most proficient and dedicated students to pursue the education profession and should encourage and provide opportunities for such students to mentor fellow students, adult learners and others in order to enhance their skills and to learn more about the profession.
26. **Access to Post-Secondary Admissions Information:** By 2007, all institutions of post-secondary education in North Dakota will provide all counselors and educators throughout the State—and to the greatest extent possible, nationally and internationally—with access to updated information on that institution's expectations and requirements for admission to and graduation from the institution. Such expectations and requirements will contain not only those currently in place but also those anticipated to be in place at least four years in the future.

Next Steps

The recently released draft report of the North Dakota Education Improvement Commission (EIC), while its focus has been on equity issues, states, in pertinent part:

- Beyond the statutory requirements and funding policies of the State of North Dakota, it could be argued that there are a number of **"expectations"** of school districts that remain undefined in any formal way but nevertheless are assumed to be prevalent in almost all school districts. Further, there are general understandings of "Best practices" that are strongly encouraged by administrators but are not "required" per se. **It should be the goal of the legislature to review these "Best practices" on an ongoing basis and continually review which of these should be included in the state's own definition of an adequate education.**
- Research indicates that **teachers with more training and more experience do improve educational outcomes generally.** Policymakers should ensure that adequate resources are identified to fund a prototypical teaching staff with varying levels of qualification and experience in every school district.
- Career development specialists as well as the popular media, have arrived at a general consensus that **many of the best job opportunities in the future will require the availability of instruction in advanced Math and Science as well as formal instruction in foreign language.** Legislators should review these changing expectations in school curriculums over time and make policy decisions that coincide with the expectations of the general public. Once these policy choices are determined, legislators should identify the means by which all school districts have adequate resources available to fund these course requirements. (Emphasis added)

The Task Force has heard from a broad array of experts, learned a great deal from each other in the course of its deliberations and agreed upon a Mission, Vision, Goals and 26 strategies to be implemented to address serious education challenges in North Dakota and to achieve its Vision of a "world-class" education system. Its recommendations are consistent with and address the "adequacy" recommendations of the EIC. It is essential, therefore, that these recommendations be treated with urgency. Many strategies can be implemented with and through the education JPAs, which may be able to do so in a more cost-effective manner.

While the recommended strategies have been prioritized by the Task Force, they need not be implemented in priority order. Some strategies are already being implemented; some, with a nudge from the Joint Boards, could be implemented relatively quickly. Some will likely require legislative action.

The Joint Boards will need to determine which strategies the Joint Boards or individual boards are able to implement without legislation. The Task Force believes that the Joint Boards need to decide whether all or some of the recommendations are acceptable and make revisions as appropriate, bearing in mind that they are the product of 9 months of negotiation and consensus building among a very diverse group of North Dakotans. It will be difficult and likely counter-

productive to select some recommendations and eliminate or significantly alter others and maintain credibility of the work of the Task Force.

Two immediate actions will be essential to carrying on the work of the Task Force—establishment of a Task Force Implementation Committee, to begin the specific work of strategies implementation, and an Alignment Commission, to begin the establishment of integrated curriculums, expectations and standards. The Task Force has recommended broad policy directions. As in Michigan, it has determined that “the how” of implementation needs to be left to professionals.

The Implementation Committee will need to assist with the development of legislation as necessary, with securing state, federal, foundation and other funding and resources for ongoing funding of the Committee’s work and for implementation of the Task Force strategies. It will require substantial Joint Boards’ support as it moves forward, and that may mean that the Joint Boards need to meet more often than they have traditionally to help move the agenda forward. It may be appropriate that the Joint Boards meet with the EIC as well.

To achieve the Vision for education developed by the Task Force, the Alignment Commission should have broad authority, with and through the Joint Boards, to develop, implement and enforce uniform, consistent proficiency expectations and standards throughout the North Dakota P-16 education system and to do so on a continuing basis in order to enable changes in standards necessary to ensure that all North Dakota students are well prepared for furthering their education, for work, for citizenship and for life.

Appendix A

P-16 Education Task Force Glossary

As used in this summary, the following terms mean:

Academies	Usually, single subject education experiences which are shorter-term and more intense than traditional classes
Admission Standards	As distinct from core curriculum, although including core curriculum classes, these are requirements that must be met in order to be accepted into post-secondary institutions in North Dakota
Alignment Commission	A proposed new entity consisting of 9 members that would be created to ensure continuous alignment of curriculum, standards and practices between P-16 levels of education in North Dakota and may be charged with greater responsibility relative to implementation of P-16 consensus agreements
All Students	This term is used intentionally throughout the document to denote any and all students at any stage of their matriculation in education in North Dakota. It is intended to include American Indian, special needs, New American and other students.
Contact Days	The minimum number of full school days (currently 173 in North Dakota) in an academic year during which, in first grade through senior year of high school, teachers are required to teach students
Core	Essential and/or required
ETF	Education Task Force
Education Task Force	The entity created by the Joint Boards to examine P-16 education issues in North Dakota and develop consensus recommendations for enhancing the quality of education in grades P through 16
Educators	Unless otherwise specified, includes elementary, secondary and post-secondary institution teachers, professors, counselors and administrators
Formative Assessments	Evaluating and assisting students in such a way as to ensure they possess or are able to develop proficiency

Joint Boards

Four education boards in North Dakota—the State Board of Public School Education, the State Board of Higher Education, the Education Standards and Practices Board and the State Board for Career and Technical Education—charged by statute, Section 15.1-01-02 NDCC, with coordinating and cooperating on education issues for students, educators and administrators and on projects beneficial to education in North Dakota

JPA

In legislative terms, “education associations,” these are education districts that have agreed to work together through joint powers agreements. Currently, 94% of elementary and secondary students in North Dakota are covered by JPAs

Mentor/Mentorships

Experienced educators/others working directly with inexperienced educators/others to assist them in orientation and skills development

P-16

Pre-school through four years of college. This effort contrasts to other states’ efforts such as K-12 (kindergarten through high school), P-20 (pre-school through post-graduate/professional/PhD programs)

PLAN

An ACT program for educational planning that is a predictor of success on the ACT test and focuses attention on both career preparation and improving academic achievement, typically administered in the fall of the sophomore year of high school

Post-secondary

Institutions of learning beyond high school, which include community and junior colleges, career and technical institutions and four year colleges and universities

Professional Development

Learning new or enhancing existing skills

Proficiency

Possessing sufficient skills, knowledge and abilities to ensure success in post-secondary education institutions and preparedness for employment and citizenship

Rigor/Rigorous

As applied to curriculum, a course of study and outcomes sufficiently exacting and stimulating to ensure student proficiency

Unit

Sometimes referred to as a credit, it is a secondary school course. In the document, its use is in reference to the current North Dakota requirement for secondary school students to successfully complete 21 “units” to graduate from secondary school

Appendix B—Members and Staff of the P-16 Education Task Force

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Appendix C

North Dakota Law regarding the Joint Boards

15.1-01-02. Joint meetings - State board of public school education - State board of higher education - Education standards and practices board - State board for career and technical education. The state board of public school education, the state board of higher education, the education standards and practices board, and the state board for career and technical education shall meet together at least once each year at the call of the superintendent of public instruction, the commissioner of higher education, the executive director of the education standards and practices board, and the director of career and technical education for the purposes of:

1. Coordinating elementary and secondary education programs, career and technical education programs, and higher education programs. In order to foster such coordination, the Joint Boards shall establish and provide appropriate staffing for a permanent P-16 Alignment Commission, consisting of members appointed by the Joint Boards who represent each of the boards and at least some of whom are current P-16 educators and members of the business, American Indian and student communities. The Alignment Commission shall develop and agree upon common standards for all core curriculum courses taught by P-16 educators in the state. It will annually recommend such standards to the Joint Boards, which will consider and implement or recommend legislative implementation as appropriate of those standards on which the Joint Boards agree.
2. Cooperating in the provision of professional growth and development opportunities for elementary and secondary teachers and administrators.
3. Ensuring cooperation in any other jointly beneficial project or program.

Appendix D

The P-16 Education Task Force Mission, Vision, Goals and Strategies

[Note: Throughout this document, unless otherwise specified, everything applies to grades P through 16.]

Mission Statement

The P-16 Education Task Force is committed to involving all essential stakeholders in an open, honest and respectful dialogue that will result in bold action to create the best possible, rigorous, seamless, uniform, efficient, and measurable education system for all students in North Dakota.

Vision Statement

All North Dakota students will be educated in an innovative, relevant, integrated and challenging system providing world-class quality to prepare them to be good citizens and to take full advantage of all opportunities available to them in their lives.

Goal 1: North Dakota should put in place and enforce, throughout its P-16 education system, uniform, consistent proficiency expectations and standards and ensure that each student has a support system in place to enable the student to achieve proficiency. [This would mean an explicit move from "norm referenced" to "proficiency/competency" based standards.]

Strategies:

1. **Authority:** The legislature must give the Joint Boards the authority to develop and implement/enforce uniform, consistent proficiency expectations and standards throughout the North Dakota P-16 education system.
2. **Alignment Commission:** The Joint Boards must establish a select group of education leaders and employers, including American Indian, and other representatives in North Dakota, relying on content experts and staff and, delegate necessary authority to establish and align proficiency standards throughout the P-16 system on a continuing basis in order to enable changes in standards necessary to ensure that all students are well prepared for furthering their education, for work, for citizenship and for life. (See Appendix C)
3. **Development of Legislation:** ETF and Consensus Council Staff will work with ETF member legislators and other interested legislators/Legislative Council staff to develop a draft of such authorizing legislation by June 30, 2006.
4. **Data and Evaluation:** Such legislation authorizing the joint boards to create a seamless education process throughout North Dakota's education system must include the requirement of the development, within three years, of a uniform, statewide methodology to

follow and evaluate students and provide feedback to them throughout their matriculation in all North Dakota elementary, secondary and higher education systems.

5. Ensuring Proficiency: The system, created by the four joint boards must within eight years, ensure that high school graduates have sufficient skills, knowledge and abilities to ensure success in a post-secondary education institution and preparedness for employment and citizenship. P-12 formative assessments, with clear feedback regarding levels of performance and appropriate interventions if needed for individual students, will be in place within the same timeframe. It is understood that significant additional state funding will be required to develop this kind of system and other strategies being recommended, that unfunded mandates are very difficult for school districts and that a balance of new state resources, changes in allocation of current school district resources and other creative and innovative solutions such as those that may be provided through educational associations (Joint Powers Agreements) will be essential to developing a world class education system that will ensure success for all students.
6. Adequate Resources for All Students: The legislation must provide for a process to generate the educational resources necessary to assist all students to meet proficiency standards.
7. Core Areas: The system created by the four joint boards must, within eight years, ensure demonstrated student proficiency in four core areas (language arts/reading, math, science, and social/multi-cultural studies) in order to progress and to graduate from high school and post-secondary education.

Goal 2: All North Dakota students should have equitable access to and the expectation of completing a rigorous core curriculum/standards taught by highly qualified P-16 educators.

Strategies:

1. Pilot Projects: The 2007 legislative session should provide for several demonstration/pilot projects in small, medium and large school districts and on American Indian reservations or education associations (Joint Powers Agreements) throughout North Dakota to develop different approaches for implementing more rigorous curriculums. Between sessions, the pilots should report on progress to an appropriate interim committee and to the 2009 legislative session.
2. Graduation/Admissions Requirements: While these standards may need to be increased in the future, legislation should require that, by 2012, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards (see Goal 1, Strategy 7) set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, 1 year of a foreign or Native American language or 1 year of either career and technical education or fine arts. By 2014, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet

state proficiency equivalent standards set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 4 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, and 2 years of foreign or Native American language or 2 years of career and technical education or 2 years of fine arts. It is essential to note that, as these standards for a minimum curriculum are developed, how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency (see Goal 1) will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting "standards." The standards and assessments need to acknowledge that taking certain courses, such as language arts/reading and math, each year of high school is necessary but that obtaining foreign language "credits or equivalent learning experience" may be more beneficial in pre-high school years. Also, there is a strongly expressed preference for taking subjects in world and US history and culture—e.g., "multi-cultural studies."

3. **Additional Units:** In order to meet these enhanced standards and gain proficiency in core and other subjects and meet the demands of a new higher technology and world economy, by 2009, students graduating from high school in North Dakota must have completed 22 units, and, by 2011, all students graduating from high school in North Dakota must have completed 24 units.
4. **Academies:** Academies should be developed and fostered throughout the State through partnerships between all levels of education and the private sector to include languages and other subjects such as fine arts, music, career and technical education, internships and remediation opportunities so that all students in the State have the opportunity to attend school year-round.
5. **Full Day Kindergarten at Age 6:** Because brain research indicates that earlier learning is a critical time for developing and providing a sound basis for life-long learning, the legislature should provide full funding for all-day kindergarten and make kindergarten compulsory by age six.
6. **Increased Student-Teacher Contact Days:** In order to enhance the opportunity for greater teacher-student engagement, the North Dakota legislature should enact legislation to increase the minimum number of student-teacher contact days to 178 by 2009 and to 183 by 2011.

Goal 3: Top performing North Dakota students should be encouraged to become P-16 educators. North Dakota educators are professionals, their quality should be assured, and they should be paid accordingly, including receiving additional resources for professional development and for demonstrated improved performance.

Strategies:

1. **Improved Professional Development:** By 2008, the Joint Boards, through their professional staffs, will develop an improved P-16 educator professional development system, including mentorships, designed to enhance and continuously improve teaching practice, content

knowledge and proficiency, especially in language arts/reading, mathematics, social/multi-cultural studies and science.

2. Incentives for Degrees/Certification: Incentives provided by the 2007 North Dakota legislature to educators for assistance in and increased salary and benefits for obtaining an Advanced Degree and/or National Board Certification will ensure that North Dakota begins to increase its numbers of P-16 educators with Advanced Degrees and/or National Board Certification by at least 5% per year by 2009.
3. Incentives for Current and Prospective Teachers: Legislation enacted by the 2007 session will put in place an array of state sponsored scholarships, student loan reductions/forgiveness and other incentives for prospective proficient students and P-16 educators to utilize for all forms of professional development—i.e., to become or enhance the abilities of P-16 educators. Such incentives should be a priority in high need/hard to fill areas.
4. Pilot Projects on Linking Increased Proficiency/Educator Pay: Incentives provided by the 2007 North Dakota legislative assembly, should provide for pilot projects at all levels of education in North Dakota aimed at developing models to demonstrate alternative methods of determining when and how improved rigor of curriculums and student proficiency occur (see Goals 1 and 2) and developing alternative models for increasing salary and benefits for North Dakota P-16 educators commensurate with the demonstrated rate of improvement in curriculum rigor and student proficiency.
5. Educator Salaries at the National Average: Assuming a steady increase in curriculum rigor and student proficiency, a model(s) selected by 2011, based on pilot outcomes, will ensure that, by 2014, demonstrated proficient P-16 educator average salary and benefits will meet or exceed the national average, factoring in cost of living, and remain at those levels as long as rigor and proficiency continue to increase.
6. Educator Appreciation: The Governor, legislature, each community and every school district and campus should declare the first full week of May of each year as North Dakota Educator Appreciation Week and the first Tuesday of that week as North Dakota's Educator Day, dedicated to celebrating, recognizing, recruiting, encouraging and rewarding educators and potential educators.
7. Recruiting New Educators: Educators at all levels of education in North Dakota should actively recruit the most proficient and dedicated students to pursue the education profession and should encourage and provide opportunities for such students to mentor fellow students, adult learners and others in order to enhance their skills and to learn more about the profession.

Goal 4: North Dakota should provide academic and career assessment and counseling that is comprehensive, developmental and systematic from pre-school through post-secondary education and to employment and life, to help students:

- Enhance their academic achievement by linking classroom studies to future choices,
- Achieve skills they will need to transition successfully to post-secondary education and work, and
- Develop the skills needed to make informed decisions throughout life.

Strategies:

1. Counselor/Student Ratios: By 2009, state funding will provide a sufficient number of counselors in each district to ensure a counselor/student ratio of 1/250 as recommended by the American School Counselor Association.
2. All Students Assessed: By 2007, all students, when they enter the North Dakota education system anywhere along their K-12 education path, will be thoroughly assessed by a school counselor or other educators for level of academic and career abilities and interests.
3. Comprehensive, Consistent Counseling Program: By 2008, a state-funded PLAN ACT program, a common, consistent and comprehensive counseling program will be administered to all high school sophomore students in North Dakota. Other tools may also be utilized in addition to PLAN.
4. Individual Student Academic/Career Plans: Counselors and educators will utilize such assessments to help students develop individual student academic and career plans which will be reviewed annually with teachers and parents/guardians to determine appropriate education needs and paths for each student.
5. Integrating Career Development into Instruction: Educators and counselors will be provided with the knowledge and skills to integrate career development competencies with the standards and benchmarks of their current instructional program.
6. Access to Post-Secondary Admissions Information: By 2007, all institutions of post-secondary education in North Dakota will provide all counselors and educators throughout the State—and to the greatest extent possible, nationally and internationally—with access to updated information on that institution's expectations and requirements for admission to and graduation from the institution. Such expectations and requirements will contain not only those currently in place but also those anticipated to be in place at least four years in the future.

Senate Education Committee
Testimony on SB 2309
January 29, 2007

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Wayne Kutzer, Director of the Department of Career and Technical Education. With the amendments that have been proposed, I support SB 2309. As amended, section one of this bill is critically needed to set up the process where the joint boards can continue to work on the goals that the P-16 Task Force established. The work of the P-16 Task Force outlined a global perspective of what needs to be done to assist our young people to succeed. But as so often heard, "the devil in the details" and in this particular case it is so true. The task force recommended a standards approach, recognizing that it may take different paths for a student to end up at the same goal. It was not about the how long they have to sit in a chair or how they learned the knowledge and skills necessary to go on to the next level, it was important that they are able to succeed at the next level what ever that may be. The amended section one helps us do that.

While Section three of this bill is similar to the recommendation of the P-16 Task Force it is not what the P-16 recommended and as the amendment suggests, the section should be dropped so that work can continue to bring the elements of P-16 into a workable reality.

P-16 did not equate credits or units to the courses; it did not say four "units" of language arts. It specifically referred to "years" of language arts. While that may not seem like a big difference it was what we worked out after 9 intense months of discussion and negotiations. The difference meant to reflect flexibility on just how a student could get the knowledge. In the case of math it is important that a student have math every year in high school, but they could get that math through a math related class. If a student takes a course in electronics, computer programming, or construction the imbedded math in those courses could count. It is proven that

if students learn a concept in context they will be able to retain it and apply that math concept through understanding, that doesn't happen with rote memory. A higher level of learning takes place when a student can apply their learning to different situations.

On pages 1 line 22 and page 2 line 1 they should end with the word "or" not "and". It was the recommendation of the P-16 that it would be "foreign language or career and technical or fine arts". The way it is written in this bill foreign language is a requirement and then there is a choice of either career and technical or fine arts.

Attached is a section of the final report from the P-16 Task Force which uses the "years" term, as well as the foreign language "or" career and technical or fine arts. It further goes on to say that "how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting standards".

Through this language P-16 recognized that not all students learn the same, that alternative methods of teaching and learning need to be made available to students, and we need to be flexible in how we deliver content.

With the amendments that have been offered, I support SB 2309. I would be glad to answer any questions.

Heart Disease and Stroke. You're the Cure.

American Heart Association. 
Learn and Live..

**Testimony
Senate Bill 2309**

**Senate Education Committee
Monday, January 29, 2007**

American Stroke Association.

A Division of American Heart Association 

Chairman Freborg, members of the Senate Education Committee. My name is June Herman and I am the Senior Director of advocacy for the American Heart Association. I am here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 2309, and ask for a "do pass" recommendation from this committee.

Our specific area of interest is with the graduation requirement of Physical Education. North Dakota is one of the few states in the nation that does not have state established graduation requirements, nor does it have a mechanism for school districts to report to the state their local requirements. As a result, it is difficult to even obtain an accurate performance picture for our state in order to seek system improvements.

The habits our young people acquire as adolescents are often the practices they will continue as adults. Just last week in a meeting to develop a state cardiovascular health plan, I learned that the snapshot of our graduating seniors is not only what a community will have as its workforce, but five years later as a profile for the community's next parents. According to the Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Decrease Overweight and Obesity, only half of adolescents regularly participate in vigorous physical activity and one-fourth report no physical activity. This doesn't bode well for North Dakota workforce competitiveness or for the state's growing health care burden.

Through expanded physical education and physical activity in schools, the prospects for better health among our young people will be significantly improved. They will learn behaviors and activities that will greatly enhance the pursuit of a lifetime of physical activity. Newly designed physical education courses go far beyond "playing ball." These curriculums focus on teaching young people the kinds of lifestyles and behaviors that will enhance their physical fitness and quality of life well into their adult years.

Please give Senate Bill 2313 a "do pass" recommendation. I am willing to respond to any questions you may have.

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House Education Committee
Testimony on SB 2309
March 12, 2007

Madam Chair and members of the House Education Committee, my name is Wayne Kutzer, Director of the Department of Career and Technical Education.

I support the emphasis of this bill and some of the changes that have been made to this bill since its introduction are in keeping with the final report of the P-16 Task Force.

Unfortunately Section 1 of the original bill was deleted along with a proposed amendment which is critical to the successful implementation of this bill. Section 1 and the amendment outlined that the joint boards, which assembled the P-16 Task Force, form an alignment committee to continue to work on the goals that the P-16 Task Force established, develop a statewide implementation plan, and provide funding for it to operate.

The work of the P-16 Task Force outlined a global perspective of what needs to be done to assist our young people to succeed. But as so often heard, "the devil in the details" and in this particular case it is so true. The task force recommended a standards approach, recognizing that it may take different paths for a student to end up at the same goal. It was not about the how long they have to sit in a chair or how they learned the knowledge and skills necessary to go on to the next level, it was important that they are able to succeed at the next level what ever that may be.

As you notice in Section 2, it specifically referred to "years" of a course, instead of units or credits. Attached is a section of the final report from the P-16 Task Force which uses the "years" term. While that may not seem like a big difference it was what we worked out after 9 intense months of discussion and negotiations. The difference meant to reflect flexibility on just how a student could get the knowledge. In the case of math it is important that a student have

math every year in high school, but they could get that math through a math related class. If a student takes a course in electronics, computer programming, or construction, the imbedded math in those courses could count. It is proven that if students learn a concept in context they will be able to retain it and apply that math concept through understanding, that doesn't happen with rote memory. A higher level of learning takes place when a student can apply their learning to different situations.

In the middle of the page where it is italicized, it states "how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting standards". Through this language P-16 recognized that not all students learn the same, that alternative methods of teaching and learning need to be made available to students, and we need to be flexible in how we deliver content. Attached is a set of options that the state of Michigan established for satisfying the math requirements, through its many scenario's it illustrates how they have built flexibility into their system. That is what we need an alignment committee to work on.

This is an important bill, too important to not try to insure its success with thoughtful planning. With this change I can fully support SB 2309. I would be glad to answer any questions.

1. **Graduation/Admissions Requirements:** While these standards may need to be increased in the future, legislation should require that, by 2012, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards (see Goal 1, Strategy 7) set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 3 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, 1 year of a foreign or Native American language or 1 year of either career and technical education or fine arts. By 2014, in order to graduate from any high school and to be admitted to any post-secondary institution in North Dakota, without exception unless required by state or federal law, all students must meet state proficiency equivalent standards set for a minimum curriculum consisting of 4 years of language arts/reading, 4 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multi-cultural studies, 1 year of physical education, and 2 years of foreign or Native American language or 2 years of career and technical education or 2 years of fine arts. It is essential to note that, as these standards for a minimum curriculum are developed, how the state develops these standards and assessments of proficiency (see Goal 1) will be critical and that the methods of meeting these standards/assessments need to be flexible, incorporating alternative methods of meeting "standards." The standards and assessments need to acknowledge that taking certain courses, such as language arts/reading and math, each year of high school is necessary but that obtaining foreign language "credits or equivalent learning experience" may be more beneficial in pre-high school years. Also, there is a strongly expressed preference for taking subjects in world and US history and culture—e.g., "multi-cultural studies."

High School Graduation Math Modification Options and Sample Scenarios

(While it is not possible to anticipate all the situations that may prompt a student to seek a "personal curriculum plan" in mathematics, these scenarios may represent some common situations that schools may encounter.)

A parent or legal guardian may request the development of a personal curriculum plan. The plan must:

- Be developed by a group consisting of a student and a parent or legal guardian, the pupil's counselor or other designees selected by the principal
- Incorporate as much of the subject area content expectations as practical
- Provide a method of evaluating whether the student has achieved the goals
- Align with the student's education development plan
- A student's parent must be in contact with each of the student's teachers once each calendar quarter to monitor their child's progress in the goals contained in the personal curriculum plan

To create a personal curriculum in mathematics, a student must:

- Complete .5 credit in Algebra 2
- Complete a total of 3.5 credits in mathematics
- Complete 1 math or math-related class in the final year

Option 1:

- ✓ Student completes 2.5 credits in mathematics before requesting a modification
- ✓ Student completes .5 credit in Algebra 2
- ✓ Student completes 3.5 credits in mathematics
- ✓ Student completes 1 math or math-related class in the final year

Scenario 1: Bill successfully completes 1 credit of Algebra 1 in 9th grade, 1 credit of Geometry in 10th grade and .5 credit of Algebra 2 in the 11th grade for a total of 2.5 credits. A personal curriculum plan is developed allowing Bill not to complete the second half of Algebra 2. Bill completes 1 credit of Accounting in his final year. Bill graduates with 3.5 mathematics credits.

Scenario 2: Jean successfully completes 1 credit of Math Concepts (math-related) in 9th grade, 1 credit of Algebra 1 in 10th grade, 1 credit of Geometry in 11th grade, and .5 credit of Algebra 2 in the final year. A personal curriculum plan is developed allowing Jean not to complete the second half of Algebra 2. Jean graduates with 3.5 credits in mathematics.

Scenario 3: Courtney successfully completes 1 credit of Algebra 1 in 8th grade, 1 credit of Geometry in 9th grade, and .5 credit of Algebra 2 in 10th grade. A personal curriculum plan is developed that allows her to not to complete the second half of Algebra 2. Courtney does not take a mathematics credit in her junior year. Courtney completes Accounting (math-related) in her final year. She graduates with 3.5 credits. (This is an unlikely scenario, given her early interest and success in math).

Option 2:

- ✓ Student completes Algebra 2 over 2 years (for two credits)
- ✓ Student completes 1 math or math-related class in the final year

Scenario 1: Jake successfully completes Algebra 1 in 9th grade and Geometry in 10th grade. A personal curriculum plan is developed to allow Jake to complete 2 credits of Algebra 2 over a two year period. He graduates with 4 credits in mathematics.

Scenario 2: Sally successfully completes Algebra 1 in 8th grade and Geometry in 9th grade. A personal curriculum plan is developed that allows her complete 2 credits of Algebra 2 over a two year period in the 10th and 11th grades. Sally takes Business Math in her final year. She graduates with 5 mathematics credits.

Option 3:

- ✓ Student completes a 2 year CTE program that includes .5 credit (one semester) of Algebra 2 content
- ✓ Student completes a total of 3.5 credits in mathematics
- ✓ Student completes 1 math or math-related class in the final year

Scenario 1: Kyle enrolls in a two year cosmetology program at a regional technology center. Kyle successfully completes 1 credit of Algebra 1 in 9th grade, and 1 credit of Geometry in 10th grade. A personal curriculum plan is developed at the end of his 10th grade year. Kyle successfully completes the cosmetology program which covers .5 credit (one semester) of Algebra 2 content over the two years. He also successfully completes 1 math or math-related credit (either in the CTE program or at the home school). Kyle creates his personal curriculum plan at the end of his 10th grade year. Kyle graduates with 3.5 credits in mathematics.

Scenario 2: Alexis successfully completes Pre-Algebra in 9th grade and Algebra I in the 10th grade. She wants to enroll in a two year health services program at her Career and Technical Education Center. Although Alexis has not completed Geometry, she is eligible to enroll in a CTE program in her junior year. A personal curriculum plan is developed that requires her to complete 1 credit of Geometry (either at her home school or in the CTE program) and .5 credit of Algebra 2 content during her final two years. Alexis graduates with 3.5 credits in mathematics.

TESTIMONY ON SB 2309

House Education Committee

March 12, 2007

Patrice Anderson, Assistant Director of School Health

328.2265

Department of Public Instruction

Chairman Kelsch and members of the Committee – I am Patrice Anderson, Assistant Director of School Health for the Department of Public Instruction. On behalf of the Department, I am here to suggest an amendment to SB 2309.

It has come to the attention of the Department that there is an omission in the bill language. Allow me to direct you to page 2, line 2, and line 12 of the proposed bill which currently reads, “One year of physical education; and”. The requirement of one year of health was omitted.

In Chapter 15.1-21-02 of the Century Code, the required units that shall be made available to high school students are one-half unit of health and one-half unit of physical education.

In order to be consistent with the proposed bill language, we offer the amendment to have the text read, “One year of physical education and one year of health”.

That concludes my comments and I am willing to address any questions you may have.

House Education Committee
March 12, 2007
SB2309

Madam Chair and members of the Committee, my name is Bev Nielson with the North Dakota School Boards Association. NDSBA's 2006 Delegate Assembly passed the following resolution:

NDSBA supports the general concepts of improving education recommended by the P-16 Task Force in defining education adequacy for all students in North Dakota providing initiatives are fully funded by the state.

In reviewing the bill, we believe Section One of SB2309 could be adopted at this time without undue financial burden on our public schools.

As to Section Two of the bill, it is our position that defining specific course requirements for graduation needs to be the central topic of the Governor's Commission Interim study of adequacy. At this time, we are unable to define exactly what math or science courses would be acceptable to meet the requirements and whether the capacity currently exists to deliver them. We have not determined the potential financial impact on local schools. Furthermore, higher ed. has yet to define exactly what its expectations are for these courses in regard to admission requirements.

Through the adequacy study, these required courses can be more clearly defined and the potential financial effects determined. The work of the Governor's Commission and P-16 Task Force over the past Interim has set forth an excellent framework for the Interim study of adequacy. We believe this next step will shape a well defined expectation of curricular rigor, as well as, a fair determination of state and local funds required to deliver the programming.

In summary, we believe Section One of the bill could be adopted this Session and that Section Two should become a central issue for the Interim adequacy study.

Thank you for your consideration.

TESTIMONY on ENGROSSED SB 2309
By Dr. Gary Gronberg
Department of Public Instruction
March 12, 2007

Madam Chairman and Members of the House Education Committee,

I am Dr. Gary Gronberg, Assistant Superintendent, within the Department of Public Instruction. I am here to provide information on Engrossed SB 2309 and to propose a merger from the bill's original draft for possible inclusion in Engrossed SB 2200.

The original SB 2309 provided for the expansion of duties regarding the joint meetings conducted by the State boards of public school education, higher education, education standards and practices, and career and technical education to advance the alignment of academic content and student achievement standards. Additionally, the original SB 2309 also provided for additional high school graduation and coursework requirements. Engrossed SB 2309 has removed any reference to the alignment of academic content and student achievement standards; Engrossed SB 2309 has retained high school graduation and coursework requirements.

Engrossed SB 2309 appears to advance some elements of the recommendations issued by the P-16 Education Task Force; nevertheless, Engrossed SB 2309 does not incorporate the fuller language or intent of some of the P-16 Education Task Force's recommendations. Any effort to advance high school graduation and coursework requirements without also directly addressing the alignment of academic content and student achievement standards across the full P-16 system will result in an unfocused, inefficient education system. This is not the desired aim of any efforts to ensure system-wide educational adequacy.

The state has recently seen the advancement of key education reforms through the P-16 Education Task Force and the Governor's Education Commission. Both of these efforts have either produced or have shown a commitment to produce important reforms regarding the uniform alignment of education expectations for all our students, preschool through higher education and employment. The Department supports the work that has been conducted thus far by the P-16 Education Task Force to define challenging expectations for the state's education system; however, much more detailed

alignment work is required before the state can credibly define adequacy and appropriately advance meaningful education reforms.

The Department believes that Engrossed SB 2309 provides an inappropriate remedy for raising academic standards by confusing more credits for increased rigor of expected knowledge and skills. Engrossed SB 2309 does not provide a meaningful definition of adequacy and should not be passed with its current structure. Instead, the Department believes that the original SB 2309 should be revisited and its purpose linked to Engrossed SB 2200. The Department proposes that amendments be attached to Engrossed SB 2200 that would advance meaningful education reform regarding increased expectations for student achievement.

First, the Department believes that Engrossed SB 2309 is premature and may work in conflict with the general direction of some of the standards-based reforms that have been identified within the P-16 Education Task Force and the interests of the future adequacy study within the Education Commission contained in Engrossed SB 2200. It is premature, indeed misdirected, to dictate additional graduation or course requirements, which are measures of seat-time requirements, than to define specific expected competencies, which are definitions of achievement standards. Therefore, the Department recommends that Engrossed SB 2309 be rejected and not addressed at this time.

Second, the Department recommends consideration of amendments to Engrossed SB 2200 to advance the unique duties of the joint boards and a wider committee of education interests, whose interests range from preschool through higher education and employment. Any future discussions regarding the adequacy of education must occur within a committee structure that will adequately and appropriately include the wider array of interests that exist in our state than the more limited membership envisioned within the proposed Governor's Education Commission identified within Engrossed SB 2200. The Department believes that the work of aligning knowledge, skills, and achievement standards system-wide across all levels of public education is a prerequisite to any future work of the Governor's Education Commission. The Department proposes amendments to Engrossed SB 2200 that provide for an independent advisory committee charged with the overall alignment of academic content and achievement standards statewide. This advisory committee would develop and communicate an overarching definition of adequacy to any future Education

Commission, thereby allowing for the Commission to propose measures to finance the delivery of a truly integrated and adequate education system.

Madam, Chairman, this concludes my testimony. I am available to answer any questions from the Committee. Thank you.

Proposed Amendments to Engrossed SB 2200

Page 42, line 28 insert "Section 46. North Dakota Education Alignment Advisory Committee – Membership – Duties – Report to the North Dakota Commission on Education Improvement.

1. The North Dakota alignment advisory committee consists of
 - a. The chairman of the state board of public school education or the chairman's designee;
 - b. The chairman of the state board of higher education or the chairman's designee;
 - c. The chairman of the state board for career and technical education or the chairman's designee;
 - d. The chairman of the education standards and practices board or the chairman's designee;
 - e. The superintendent of public instruction or the superintendent's designee;
 - f. The chancellor of the North Dakota university system or the chancellor's designee;
 - g. The chairman of the Indian affairs commission or the chairman's designee;
 - h. The chairman of the North Dakota council of educational leaders or the chairman's designee;
 - i. The chairman of the North Dakota school boards association or the chairman's designee;
 - j. The chairman of the North Dakota education association or the chairman's designee;

- k. Three individuals, appointed by the chairman of the state board of higher education to represent the faculty within the North Dakota university system;
 - l. The chairman of the workforce development council or the chairman's designee;
 - m. Five individuals, appointed by the governor, who serve as employer representatives of the North Dakota chamber of commerce;
 - n. One individual, appointed by the state superintendent, who serves as a parent representative of the North Dakota individuals with disabilities education act advisory committee;
 - o. Three individuals, appointed by the state superintendent, who are parents of students within the North Dakota elementary, secondary, or university education system.
2. The committee shall establish its own duties and rules of operation and procedure, including rules relating to appointments, terms of office, vacancies, quorums, and meetings, provided that the duties and the rules do not conflict with any provisions of this section. The chairman of the Education Commission shall serve as the chairman for the education alignment advisory committee. The education alignment advisory committee will be staffed by equal members of the department of public instruction and the North Dakota university system.
3. The committee shall examine the current system of defining, aligning, measuring, and reporting academic adequacy in content and student achievement across all levels of education, including pre-school, elementary, secondary, career, and higher education.
4. The committee shall provide periodic reports to the North Dakota commission on education improvement, the governor, and the legislative council.

Renumber sections and pages accordingly.

Page 48, line 27 after "EMERGENCY.", delete "~~Section 46 of this Act is~~" and
replace with "Sections 46 and 47 of this Act are"

Algebra I. Algebra
Biology. Chemistry
Communications
Data Analysis. Economics
Environmental Science
Foreign Language
Geometry. Literature
Logic. Reasoning



Achieve, Inc.

THE EXPECTATIONS GAP

A 50-STATE REVIEW OF HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

World History. Writing
Algebra II. Biology
Chemistry. Communications
Economics. Environmental
Science. Foreign Language
Literature. Logic
U.S. History. World
History. Writing. Algebra
Reasoning. Chemistry

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- IV. Course requirements: How do they measure up? (10)
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Earlier this year, the American Diploma Project (ADP) — created by Achieve, The Education Trust and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation — found that shockingly few of the nation's high school students gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and the workforce. In this new report, Achieve provides one important explanation for this phenomenon: **No state requires its graduates to take the courses that reflect the real-world demands of work and postsecondary education.**

To be prepared for the challenges they will face after graduation, every high school student should take four years of rigorous math, including Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, as well as data analysis and statistics. Every student also should take four years of grade-level English, with courses that include literature, writing, reasoning, logic and communication skills.

No state currently requires every high school student to take a college- and work-preparatory curriculum to earn a diploma. While some states offer students the option to pursue a truly rigorous course of study, a less rigorous set of course requirements remains the standard in almost every state. Only Arkansas, Indiana and Texas have made or will soon make a college-preparatory curriculum the norm.

In math, 13 states require two years, 24 states and the District of Columbia require three years and just five states — Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina and West Virginia — require all students to complete four math courses for graduation. Nonetheless, nearly half the states (22) do not specify which math courses students need to take. Of those that do, only Arkansas, Indiana and Texas now or soon will require Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II.

In English, 36 states and the District of Columbia require all students to take at least four English courses to graduate, and six states require three courses. Only six states — Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, North

Carolina, Texas and West Virginia — specify four years of grade-level English. Across states, course descriptions in English are inconsistent and ill defined, making it very difficult to ensure they are rigorous.

To close the expectations gap, Achieve recommends that states:

- **Require all students to take a common college- and work-preparatory curriculum in math and English.** Arkansas, Indiana and Texas are leading the way, requiring students to opt out of a college- and work-preparatory curriculum, rather than opt in.
- **Pay attention to content, not just course titles.** State standards must clearly describe the level, rigor and content expected of required courses to ensure that educators have a common understanding of what is essential for students to learn.
- **Align academic standards in high school with the knowledge and skills required for college and workplace success.** States must work with postsecondary officials and employers to define the knowledge and skills necessary for graduates to successfully perform in college and the workplace without the need for remediation.
- **Provide clear guidance on essential courses and allow flexibility for instructional approaches.** To ensure greater consistency and equity, states should articulate what is most important for students to learn and give local educators the flexibility to decide upon specific approaches for delivering that content.
- **Encourage students to go beyond the core.** States should encourage all students — particularly low-achieving students — to pursue accelerated options for earning postsecondary credit while in high school.
- **Monitor results.** States should track student achievement from K–12 through postsecondary education and use data to help improve the rigor of course offerings and instruction in high school.

Earlier this year, Achieve, The Education Trust and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation issued a groundbreaking report from the American Diploma Project (ADP), *Ready or Not: Creating a High School Diploma That Counts*, which laid out a set of recommendations for strengthening the preparation of high school graduates and restoring value to the American high school diploma. A core recommendation was that states align their high school graduation requirements with the knowledge and skills students need to do credit-bearing coursework in college or to start career-track positions in high-growth, high-performance industries.

The report marked the culmination of more than two years of intensive research. Its findings were remarkable, showing a clear convergence today between what college professors *and* employers say students need to know and be able to do to succeed in college or the workplace. This finding is in stark contrast to the realities of an earlier era when students bound for college needed more academic training than those bound for work.

Since issuing the ADP report, Achieve has studied high school graduation requirements in states around the country to better understand how well they align with college- and work-ready standards. In June, Achieve released a report on six states' high school graduation exams, *Do Graduation Tests Measure Up? A Closer Look at State High School Exit Exams*, which revealed a sizeable gap between the skills students must demonstrate to pass these tests and the skills they need to succeed in college or work. In fact, the study found that the majority of the questions on the tests reflect material that most students study early in their high school careers, if not in middle school. In math, for example, the tests place a heavier emphasis on prealgebra concepts than on content associated with high school algebra. In English, the tests are a better measure of basic reading comprehension skills than of the more advanced critical reading and analysis skills that students will need in college and the jobs of the new economy.

Although graduation exams play a pivotal role in setting a standard for high school graduation in about half the states, the most commonly used criterion for awarding a high school diploma in the United States today is course-taking. Nearly every state requires students to study specific subjects for a certain number of years or take specific courses to graduate. This may come as a surprise to some people, given that K–12 education has been moving steadily toward a standards-based system, in which performance should matter more than seat time. Yet despite states' attention to defining measurable outcomes, high schools are still organized largely on the basis of course requirements, or Carnegie units.

As part of a continuing effort to understand how graduation requirements relate to the real-world demands students face after high school, Achieve launched a review of high school course requirements in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. In spring 2004, Achieve collected detailed data from every state education agency on the course-taking requirements for earning a high school diploma. The goal was to compare those requirements with what students need to be successful in college or the workplace. This report summarizes Achieve's findings across the states.

HOW WELL PREPARED ARE TODAY'S HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES?

Although students and their parents believe that a high school diploma reflects adequate preparation for the intellectual demands of adult life, the reality is that across the United States, students can earn one without mastering the knowledge and skills they need to succeed after graduation. As a result, too many American youth leave high school with a diploma in hand but largely unprepared for the opportunities and challenges that await them in college and the workplace.

The statistics are alarming. One study estimates that, nationwide, only 32 percent of students who enter 9th grade and graduate four years later have mastered basic literacy skills and have completed the coursework necessary to succeed in a four-year college. For African Americans, this figure is 20 percent, and for Latinos it is just 16 percent.¹

Yet three-quarters of high school graduates go on to postsecondary education within two years of leaving high school. The result: Nearly 30 percent of college freshmen are immediately placed into remedial courses that cover material they should have learned in high school (see chart 1). In fact, over the course of their college careers, more than 40 percent of postsecondary students will take at least one remedial course.²

Although these courses are designed to help students catch up, students who require remediation are generally less successful in college and are less likely to earn

degrees than their peers who do not require remediation. Three-quarters (76 percent) of students who require remediation in reading and nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of those who require one or two remedial math courses fail to earn degrees. In contrast, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of students who do not require remediation complete associate's degrees or bachelor's degrees.³

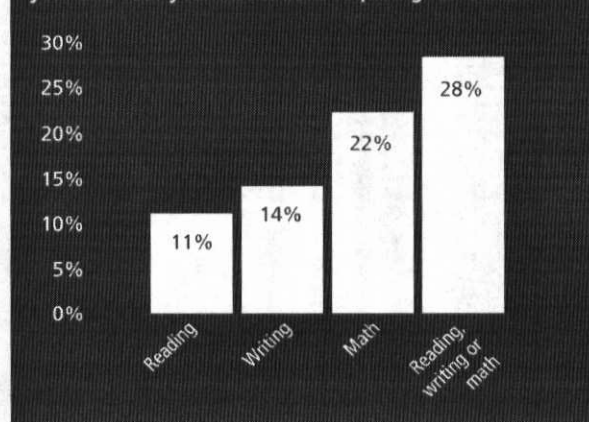
Unprepared graduates who enter the workforce directly after high school face similar challenges. Employers report that a majority of high school graduates are inadequately prepared to succeed in an

increasingly competitive economy. In a 2002 study, more than 60 percent of employers reported that recent graduates had poor math skills, while nearly 75 percent pointed to a deficiency in grammar and writing skills (see chart 2).⁴ Unqualified and untrainable, these high school graduates are likely to become trapped in unskilled, low-paying jobs that

do not support a family well above the poverty level, provide benefits or offer a clear pathway for advancement.

According to a wide range of economic, education and business experts, good jobs require more math and English than ever before, and workers will need some postsecondary education or training — whether it is in the form of two- or four-year college coursework, apprenticeships, or the military — to meet the needs of the high-performance workplace. If U.S.

Chart 1: Percentage of first-year college students in two-year and four-year institutions requiring remediation



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, *Remedial Education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2000, 2003*.

workers cannot meet the demand, many of the highly skilled jobs may go to workers in other countries, such as China and India, which will have a significant impact on U.S. competitiveness in the global economy.

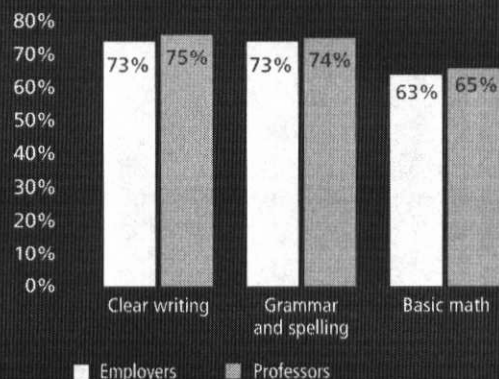
Course-taking patterns matter

Preparing for college and work requires taking the right courses. This is particularly true when it comes to math, where data show a strong correlation between taking higher-level courses in high school and achieving success in college and employment in high-growth, high-performance jobs.

In his 1999 study, Clifford Adelman found that “of all the components of curriculum intensity and quality, none has such an obvious and powerful relationship to ultimate completion of degrees as the highest level of mathematics one studies in high school.”⁵ Indeed, Adelman reports that the higher the level of math students take in high school, the more likely they are to earn bachelor’s degrees and that the threshold is a substantive course beyond Algebra II.⁶

Further studies show that high school course-taking in math and English also is an indication of students’ opportunity for success in the high-performance workplace. A report by Educational Testing Service researchers Anthony P. Carnevale and Donna M. Desrochers found that 84 percent of those who currently hold highly paid professional jobs had taken Algebra II or higher as their last high school math course. Among those who hold well-paid, white-collar, skilled jobs, 67 percent had taken Algebra II or a higher-level math course, and 84 percent had taken at least Geometry. In English, the vast majority of workers in good jobs had taken “four years of English that is at least at grade level.”⁷

Chart 2: Percentage of professors and employers who rate graduates’ skills as “fair” or “poor”



Source: Public Agenda, Reality Check 2002, 2002.

In its October 2004 report, *Crisis at the Core: Preparing All Students for College and Work*, ACT further underscores that taking challenging courses in high school pays off. ACT analyzed how students did in their freshman college courses and then looked back at the courses they had taken in high school. ACT reports that students taking Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II and one additional higher-level course are much more likely to succeed in college than those who take a less rigorous sequence of courses (i.e., they have a 75 percent chance of earning a C or better and a 50 percent chance of earning a B or better in credit-bearing college courses).⁸

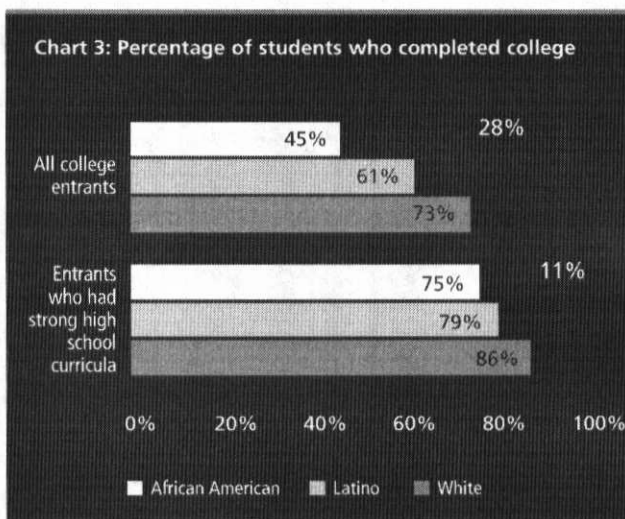
What courses they take matters for all students, but it is particularly important for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Taking a rigorous high school curriculum that includes math at least through Algebra II cuts the gap in college completion rates between white students and African American and Latino students in half (see chart 3).⁹

Unfortunately, minority youngsters are significantly less likely to take rigorous, college- and work-preparatory curricula than are Asian and white students. Of the graduating class of 2000, fewer than one-third of

American Indian (29 percent), Latino (31 percent) and African American (32 percent) students took a math course beyond Algebra II, compared with nearly half of white students (47 percent) and more than two-thirds of Asian students (69 percent) who did.¹⁰

In places where a college-preparatory curriculum is an option rather than a requirement, disadvantaged students are less likely to be in schools that offer enough college-preparatory courses, may not know which courses they must take to be prepared for college, and may require the approval of a guidance counselor or other school official to enroll

in more challenging courses. Each of these factors can be an obstacle to many students who could benefit from taking challenging, college-preparatory courses.



Source: Adapted from Adelman, *Answers in the Toolbox: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment*, June 1999, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.

Yet when minority students are required to take rigorous college-preparatory curricula, they rise to the challenge. For example, the San Jose Unified School District in California recently showed dramatic results after it required all students to take the A-G curriculum required for admission to the University of California system.

Between 1998 and 2002, test scores of African American 11th graders increased nearly seven times as much as those of African American students across the state. What's more, the more rigorous requirements have not resulted in the increase in dropout rates that some had predicted.¹¹

What does readiness for college require? And what does it mean to be "ready" to enter the high-performance workplace that increasingly will be the source of the most promising jobs for high school graduates?

To answer these questions, Achieve's American Diploma Project (ADP) worked closely with K-12, postsecondary and business leaders in five states (Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada and Texas) to develop a set of readiness benchmarks that will give high school students the widest possible range of opportunities — for work or further education and training — upon graduation.

As a first step, leading economists examined labor market projections for the most promising jobs — those that pay enough to support a small family and provide real potential for career advancement — to pinpoint the academic knowledge and skills required for success in those occupations. ADP then surveyed officials from 22 occupations, ranging from manufacturing to financial services, about the high school-level skills they believe are most useful for their employees to bring to the job. Following those conversations, ADP worked closely with two- and four-year postsecondary leaders in the partner states to determine the prerequisite English and math knowledge and skills required for success in entry-level, credit-bearing courses in English, math, the sciences and the humanities.

The resulting ADP benchmarks are ambitious, reflecting an unprecedented convergence in what these employers and postsecondary faculty need from new employees and entering freshmen. In math, they reflect a rigorous four-year course sequence that includes content typically taught in Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, as well as some data analysis and statistics. The English benchmarks demand strong oral and written communication skills because they are staples in college classrooms and most 21st century jobs. They also contain analytic and reasoning skills that formerly were associated with advanced or honors courses in high school. Today, however, colleges and employers agree that all high school graduates need these essential skills. Students who meet these standards should be prepared for success, whatever path they choose to pursue after high school.

■ English

The ADP college and workplace readiness benchmarks for English are organized into eight strands: Language, Communication, Writing, Research, Logic, Informational Text, Media and Literature.

Language: Employers and college faculty cite correct grammar, usage, punctuation, capitalization and spelling as essential to success. The ADP benchmarks require students to demonstrate control of standard English. They also emphasize the importance of recognizing nuances in the meanings of words and choosing words precisely to enhance communication.

Communication: Strong communication and listening skills are essential to success in college and on the job. High school graduates should be able to make effective presentations — and be able to interpret and judge the effectiveness of others' presentations and speeches.

Writing: Strong writing skills have become increasingly important. High school graduates must be prepared to write quickly and clearly on demand for a variety of purposes — whether in the workplace or in college classrooms (e.g., to interpret literature, analyze the results of a scientific experiment or communicate a new bank policy for granting loans).

Research: In the workplace, employees must be able to produce and evaluate the credibility of research to establish, reject or refine products and services. In college, students must be able to write research papers that draw on a number of sources to marshal evidence in support of a clear thesis.

Logic: Employers and college professors cite the ability to reason — to think critically, logically and dispassionately — as an absolutely necessary skill for success. High school graduates must be able to judge the credibility of sources, evaluate arguments, and distin-

guish among facts and opinions. For example, they should have experience analyzing two or more texts addressing the same topic to determine how authors reach similar or different conclusions.

Informational Text: Whether on the job or in college, high school graduates will be faced with a wide range of reference materials (e.g., periodicals, memoranda, reviews and technical manuals) that they will need to interpret, synthesize and use to inform decisions or draw conclusions. From these multiple informational and technical sources, graduates also must be equipped to identify interrelationships among ideas and compare and contrast texts.

Media: Colleges and employers say that high school graduates must be able to evaluate auditory, visual and written images and other effects used in television, radio, film and the Internet. These interpretive skills can help them recognize potential bias in media — and help them become savvy media consumers.

Literature: Strong analytic skills are critical to success in college and on the job. Practice in interpreting complex literary texts — and providing evidence to support those interpretations — fosters the skill of reading any text closely and teaches students to think logically and coherently — priority skills identified by employers and postsecondary faculty. The benchmarks include sample reading lists to illustrate the quality and complexity of texts that students should read.

■ Math

The ADP college and workplace readiness benchmarks for math are organized into four domains of math: Number Sense and Numerical Operations; Algebra; Geometry; and Data Interpretation, Statistics and Probability.

In addition to procedural math skills, college students and employees also must be equipped with critical thinking and reasoning skills that professors and employers say are critical for success. When solving problems, graduates must be able to think strategically about what problem needs to be solved, make judgments about which operations and proce-

dures to apply, try different approaches if necessary, and check for the reasonableness of solutions. These essential skills are woven throughout the ADP math benchmarks.

Number Sense and Numerical Operations: Number sense is the cornerstone of math in everyday life. Comparing prices, deciding whether to buy or lease a car, balancing a checkbook, deciding where to invest savings and understanding much of what appears in a daily newspaper all require understanding of and facility with quantified information. High school graduates must be able to understand the relationships between numbers; be able to add, subtract, multiply and divide with and without a calculator; and be equipped to make reasonable estimations and mental computations.

Algebra: Colleges and employers need high school graduates who are well versed in algebra — and can apply their knowledge to everyday problems. For example, graduates should be able to predict savings based on a rate of interest, project business revenues and estimate future populations based on known population growth rates.

Geometry: Geometric measurement is the basis by which we quantify the world. Employers and professors say that graduates should be well versed in working with two- and three-dimensional shapes and figures — and should understand the logic of geometric proofs and theorems. In everyday life, graduates need to understand spatial relations to solve basic problems, such as resolving the best way to fit an oversized object through a door or deciding how to design a house for maximum living space with minimal timber costs.

Data Interpretation, Statistics and Probability:

Graduates must be able to interpret, analyze and describe data quickly and accurately. Visual representations of data (e.g., charts, graphs and diagrams) are abundant, and employers and professors want graduates who can make predictions and develop and evaluate inferences from these data.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: HOW DO THEY MEASURE UP?

Achieve's analysis reveals that no state *requires* every student to take a college- and work-preparatory curriculum to earn a diploma. In *every* state, a student can take all of the courses necessary to graduate and still leave high school unprepared for work and postsecondary education.

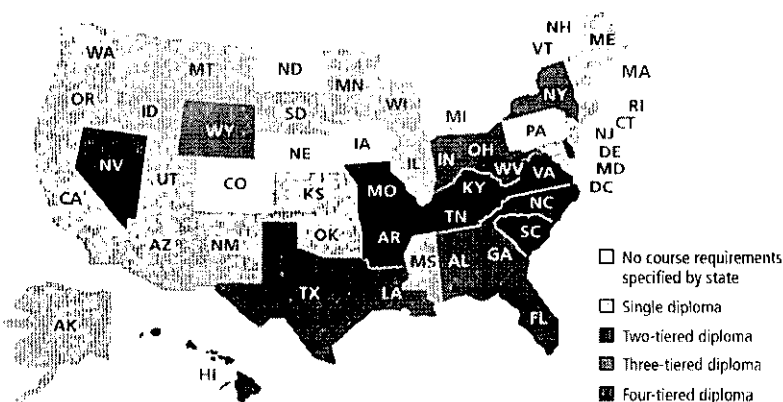
However, Achieve did find several states that are making progress toward requiring all students to complete course sequences that prepare them for college or work. Of particular note are Arkansas, Indiana and Texas, where all students soon will be automatically enrolled in a "default" course of study that is intended to align with college- and work-ready expectations. While students may still *opt out* of this course of study with permission from parents and school administration, this method is preferable to the traditional one in which students and their parents have to *opt in* to rigorous courses, often creating barriers to participation.

Overview of state course requirements

Forty-two states and the District of Columbia define course-taking requirements for earning a high school diploma, whereas eight states leave this decision up to local school boards. States that define high school course-taking requirements do so in two different ways: The majority of states require students to complete *a number* of courses in math and English to graduate, but they do not specify *which* courses students must take. Other states specify *both* the number and level of required courses, which helps to clarify expectations and make the diploma more meaningful. In math, for example, it is more useful to require students to take Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II than simply three years of math.

Most states offer only one diploma, and all students must meet the same requirements to earn it. Some states also offer higher-level diplomas, but they are not required for all students. These "tiered" diplomas provide students with different paths to graduation and different skill sets upon completion.

State Diploma Systems Vary



Source: Achieve survey/research, 2004.

To earn a general diploma students typically must take about 20 courses during their high school careers, including four in English, three in math, three in social studies, and two and a half in science. In states with tiered diplomas, students earning the higher-level diplomas commonly must take 24 courses to graduate — an extra course per year beyond the requirements for the general diploma.¹²

A closer look at math requirements

College professors and employers agree that to be successful beyond high school, graduates should have mastered the content typically taught in a rigorous four-year course sequence of Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, as well as data analysis and statistics. There is a growing consensus that students should take math during their senior year in high school — preferably a course beyond

MOVING TOWARD A COLLEGE- AND WORK-READY "DEFAULT CURRICULUM"

Both Arkansas and Texas have established rigorous default curricula that are designed to prepare all students for success in work and postsecondary education. Indiana is in the process of adopting its Core 40 curriculum as its default. A default curriculum is one that students are automatically enrolled in unless they, together with their parents and counselors, "opt out."

The table below illustrates Arkansas', Indiana's and Texas' math course requirements, which meet or approach the college- and work-ready expectations outlined in the ADP study. For the full set of course requirements in these states, see Appendix.

	Course Requirements in Math That Meet College- and Work-Ready Expectations	Arkansas Smart Core (in effect for class of 2010)	Indiana Core 40 Curriculum (proposed for class of 2011)	Texas Recommended High School Program (in effect for class of 2008)	Typical Course Requirements in Math
Total Number of Years Required	4	4	3	3	3
Algebra I	X	X	X	X	X*
Geometry	X	X	X	X	
Algebra II	X	X	X	X	
Other	Coursework in data analysis and statistics	An additional course beyond Algebra II			

* Twenty states and the District of Columbia specify required courses. Algebra I is the only course common to all.

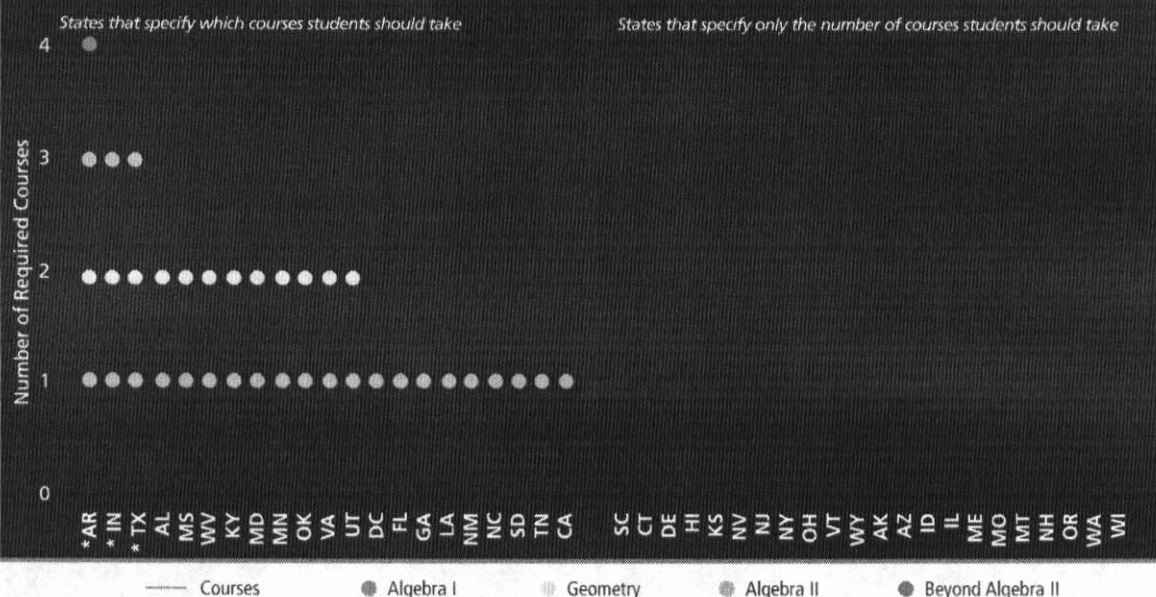
Algebra II — to ensure that they continue to strengthen their knowledge and skills.

Twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia require students to complete three or more years of math, but 13 states only require two years. Twenty states and the District of Columbia specify not only the number of courses but also which ones students must take. In these states, Algebra I is the most common requirement, although a growing number of states also are requiring Geometry. Few go beyond Algebra I and Geometry (see chart 4).

How many math courses do states require for a general diploma? Thirteen states require two, 24 states and the District of Columbia require three, and five states — Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, South Carolina and West Virginia — require all students to complete four math courses to graduate.

Which math courses do states require for a general diploma? Twenty-two states do not specify which math courses students must take to graduate from high school.¹³ Of the states that do specify courses, eight states and the District of Columbia require only Algebra I, and nine states require both Algebra

Chart 4: Few states require all of the math courses needed to prepare students for college or work



*Default Curriculum
Source: Achieve survey/research, 2004.

I and Geometry. Arkansas, Indiana and Texas require Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II (with Arkansas requiring an additional course beyond Algebra II) as part of their default programs of study.

Which states have math requirements for a general diploma that are aligned with college- and work-ready expectations? Currently, no state requires four years of math through at least Algebra II for all students. However, Arkansas, Indiana and Texas come very close, requiring students to enroll in a course of study defined by the state as college- and work-preparatory and requiring students and parents to explicitly assume responsibility for the consequences of selecting a less rigorous option. Texas' "default diploma," which is in effect for the class of 2008, requires Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, and Indiana's requirement for the same sequence of courses should go into effect for the class of 2011. Only Arkansas requires a four-year sequence that includes at least one course beyond Algebra II; this goes into effect for the class of 2010. In all three

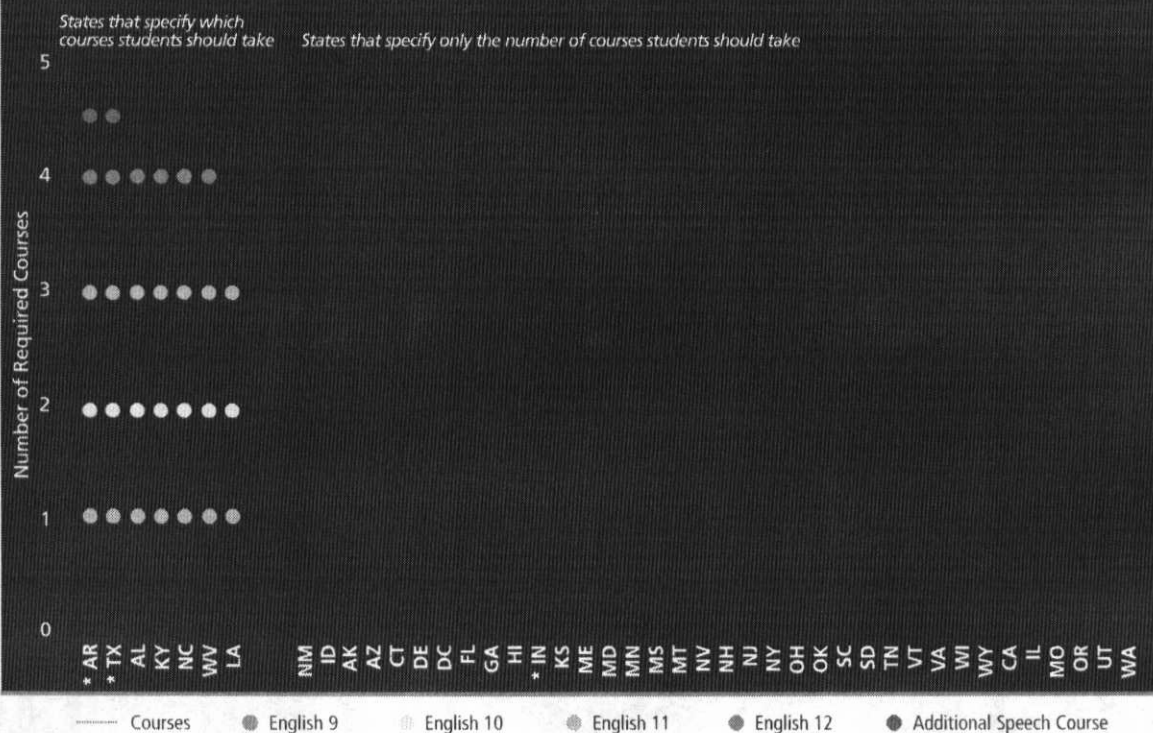
states, parents who would prefer to have their children move from this curriculum to a different, less challenging one must opt out. This opt-out requirement is a dramatic departure from the practices in other states.

Do any states with tiered diplomas have math requirements that are aligned with college- and work-ready expectations? The top-tier diploma in 13 states — Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, North Carolina, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia — specifies a sequence that includes at least Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II (or their equivalents). In five of these states — Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Indiana and North Carolina — the top-tier diploma requires courses beyond Algebra II, reaching the level that Achieve considers aligned with college and work.¹⁴

A closer look at English requirements

To be successful in college and well-paying jobs, high school graduates must have strong oral and

Chart 5: Most states require four years of English but do not specify content



*Default Curriculum
Source: Achieve survey/research, 2004.

written communication skills. In addition, college professors and employers agree that all graduates must have analytic and reasoning skills that have traditionally been associated with advanced or honors high school courses.

How do states' course requirements measure up? It is hard to tell. To a large extent, this is due to the imprecise nature of the English curriculum. Whereas in math there is a sequential set of courses students traditionally take in high school (e.g., Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II) and a common understanding of the content associated with each course, there is no such common currency in high school English courses. As students progress through the grades, they presumably read more complex texts and build their writing skills. However, there is no common understanding in the discipline of what should be taught at each grade level, nor is there agreement on

a specific body of knowledge associated with specific English courses (e.g., English 10, American Literature). This lack of clarity makes it very difficult to discern anything conclusive from state English requirements (see chart 5).

How many English courses do states require for a general diploma? Thirty-two states and the District of Columbia require all students to take four English courses to graduate with a general diploma. Six other states require three courses. The four remaining states — Arkansas, Idaho, New Mexico and Texas — require students to take more than four English courses, typically an additional course in speech.

Which English courses do states require for a general diploma? Very few states specify through course names or content descriptions what topics should be covered in the required courses. Six states —

Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, North Carolina, Texas and West Virginia — require four years of grade-level English or a four-year sequence of courses (i.e., English I–IV), yet none of the six indicates what topics these courses should cover. Arkansas and Texas also require an additional semester of speech or oral communication. A dozen states provide a list of topics to be covered (e.g., reading, composition and writing) or a list of topical units (e.g., *x* units of American

Literature), but these lists do not convey a four-year progression of English knowledge and skills culminating in college readiness by the end of 12th grade.

The result is a fuzzy picture of what high school students are expected to learn in English. Contrast this with the vivid picture employers and colleges paint of the importance of reading, writing and communicating — and the mismatch becomes clear.

BEYOND MATH AND ENGLISH

Although this report focuses on math and English, it also is important for high school graduates to have learned the natural and social sciences and foreign languages. Each state's course-taking requirements in those subjects should be sufficient to provide students with the opportunity to attend college. As the following overview indicates, course requirements vary across the states.

■ Social Studies

Requirements in social studies can include a range of courses: U.S. history, U.S. government, state history and government, world history or civilizations, geography, and economics. On average, states require three social studies courses, and all but seven states specify at least the equivalent of one full course that students must take. Thirty-four states and the District of Columbia require students to study U.S. history, 32 states and the District of Columbia require U.S. government, and seven states and the District of Columbia require state or local history or government. Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia require students to study world history or civilizations, and 19 states and the District of Columbia require world geography. Nineteen

states require students to study economics, whether economics is included among the social studies course requirements or listed as a separate area of study.

■ Science

All 42 states with general diplomas and the District of Columbia require students to take science courses to graduate. Most commonly, students are required to take two or three science courses. In contrast, Illinois requires only one science course, while Alabama alone requires four. Twenty states and the District of Columbia do not specify which science courses students must take. Of the states that do specify courses, 15 require Biology and either an integrated physical science course or separate Chemistry and Physics courses; two

require simply a Biology course. Six states require a course in earth, space or environmental science. Four additional states — Arkansas, Utah, Virginia and Washington — allow students to choose from a list of specified courses to satisfy the graduation course requirements in science.

■ Foreign Language

The study of a foreign language is a more common requirement for college admissions than for high school graduation. Accordingly, only three states and the District of Columbia require that all students take a foreign language in high school. New Jersey and New York require only one year of a foreign language, while the District of Columbia and Texas require two years.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATE POLICY LEADERS

There is ample evidence that there is a *performance* gap in American education — too many young people graduate from high school poorly prepared for college and work. Achieve's review of high school graduation requirements makes clear that there also is an *expectations* gap. Because state expectations, as defined by high school graduation requirements, reflect an economy and society that no longer exist, students who do precisely what is expected of them are not likely to be prepared for college and work. Today's students deserve much better than that.

The problems of inadequate preparation and weak postsecondary performance cannot be addressed unless the expectations problem is addressed as well. Officials in 42 states and the District of Columbia set high school graduation requirements; in the remaining states, responsibility is delegated to local school boards. Together, those adults have the primary responsibility for setting the right expectations for our nation's youth.

It is time to finish the work of standards-based reform begun some 15 years ago. Every state must set standards for what students should learn by the time they complete high school, not just by the end of 10th grade. Every state should make sure these standards clearly reflect the real-world demands of work and postsecondary education. And every state should make these standards consequential — not just aspirational — by incorporating them into the courses and exams that students must take and pass to earn high school diplomas.

■ Require all students to take a common college- and work-preparatory curriculum in math and English.

Success in postsecondary education and well-paying jobs requires a common and rigorous set of skills in math and English. Therefore, states must require *all* students to take and pass a common college- and work-preparatory course of study to earn high school

diplomas. This course of study should include four years of rigorous math, including Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II, as well as data analysis and statistics. It also should include four years of grade-level English, with courses that include literature, writing, reasoning, logic and communication skills.

To accomplish this, most states will need to increase the number of required math courses and also specify the particular courses students must take. In addition, some states will need to abandon outmoded tiered diploma systems that award some students college-preparatory diplomas and permit others to earn diplomas without college- and work-ready foundations. Such diplomas were appropriate in an era when large numbers of students went directly to well-paying, blue-collar jobs right out of high school. That era is behind us, and those diplomas should be as well.

Arkansas and Texas have taken the greatest strides in this direction by making a college- and work-preparatory curriculum the default, and Indiana is poised to do the same through its Core 40 program. While technically not a requirement for *all* students, this approach has a number of virtues. It sets and communicates a very clear expectation for what courses students should take to be prepared for life after high school. It removes obstacles students frequently encounter in gaining access to a rigorous curriculum, while simultaneously underscoring the ultimate responsibility of students and their parents for taking advantage of the opportunity. By providing an alternative for what hopefully will be a small number of students and their families who wish to pursue a less rigorous program, it does not let the perfect become the enemy of the good. As these states and others gain experience with this approach, they will be able to monitor the number of students who opt out of the core curriculum and determine if adjustments are needed.

Indiana and Texas are going beyond aligning high school expectations with the demands of college and the workforce. Both states have set a rigorous curriculum as the default for every student, and both are implementing college admissions/placement and financial aid policies that reinforce their high school graduation course requirements. These two states are well on their way to ending the mixed messages inherent in a system that has one set of expectations for leaving high school and another for entry into postsecondary education.

■ Texas

Texas is the first state to make a rigorous curriculum the default for all students. Beginning with this year's freshman class, all high school students will be placed in the Texas Recommended High School Program unless their parents specifically ask that they take a less rigorous course sequence. This default course of study includes three years of math through Algebra II, four years of grade-level English, three years of science, four years of social studies and two years of a foreign language. Students who take these courses meet or exceed the course requirements for admissions in public colleges and universities in Texas, and they are eligible for grants from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board that offset the cost of tuition.

In addition, Texas has worked to align high school and postsecondary expectations by using the same assessment — the 11th grade Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) — as both the high school graduation test and a college placement exam. Students must earn a certain score to receive a high school diploma, but if they reach a higher cut score they are considered ready for credit-bearing courses in state institutions of higher education and are not required to take a separate placement test. Texas is currently the only state that has combined its graduation and placement tests in this way.

■ Indiana

Indiana also has made considerable progress in aligning high school and postsecondary standards. The Indiana Education Roundtable — led by the governor and state superintendent of instruction — has recommended that, beginning with the graduating class of 2011, all students should be required to take the "Core 40" curriculum unless they formally opt out.

As in Texas, the Indiana Core 40 includes three years of math through Algebra II, four years of English, three years of science and three years of social studies. The Roundtable has recommended that, beginning with the class of 2011, completion of the Core 40 curriculum should be required for admission to state four-year institutions of higher education and encouraged for admission to state two-year institutions.

To provide an additional, powerful incentive for students, the Roundtable also has recommended that completion of the Core 40 curriculum be required for state financial aid eligibility at four-year institutions.

New requirements cannot be implemented overnight, nor should they be. There must be enough lead time to provide students with the necessary academic preparation and to recruit and prepare teachers to teach the more rigorous courses. This will be particularly important in urban and rural districts already facing shortages of teachers with the necessary subject matter expertise in math.

■ Align academic standards in high school with the knowledge and skills required for college and workplace success.

State standards provide the framework for state assessments and local curriculum. If the standards do not reflect the knowledge and skills most essential for young people to learn by the time they complete high school, the curriculum or the assessments are not likely to either. Every state should have standards that define what students need to learn through the 12th grade — and these standards must be anchored in the real-world demands of postsecondary education and work.

Unfortunately, states rarely validate their standards with employers and postsecondary faculty to ensure that they are aligned with the knowledge and skills required for success in the workplace and college. Remedying this situation will require the joint efforts of state postsecondary and K–12 leaders. For example, in Ohio, the postsecondary system is defining a common, “remediation-free” standard that spells out the knowledge and skills necessary to take credit-bearing courses in two- and four-year institutions throughout the state postsecondary system. Postsecondary and K–12 educators then will work together to revise the high school standards so that they become more tightly aligned with these expectations.

■ Pay attention to content — not just course titles.

Course titles, although important, are not sufficient. Content standards must clearly describe the level, rigor and content of courses to ensure that the expectations for all students are transparent and comparable. Too often, state standards do not do this, leaving too much open to interpretation. The likely result is that what is taught in these courses throughout the state will vary considerably.

In kindergarten through grade 8, state standards typically articulate the content that should be covered each year. Why should it be any different in high school? As course-taking patterns become much more diverse, standards should be even clearer, so teachers have a common understanding of what is essential for students to learn and so parents have assurance that the courses their children are taking are preparing them for college and work. In addition, standards should be organized primarily around the set of courses that states require for graduation from high school. Four states — Alabama, Kentucky, North Carolina and Texas — have taken this approach, articulating the course standards in English and math for at least the top-level or default diploma.

■ Provide guidance but allow flexibility.

In addition to standards, states and districts should help ensure that school curricula reflect the content that students need to succeed in college and work. While it is neither desirable nor feasible for states to mandate a statewide curriculum or monitor each school’s course syllabi, they should provide clear guidance about what is most important for students to learn. This is important for the sake of equity across schools and districts. It also is extremely useful in addressing the widespread problem of student mobility within states, as well as in providing guidance for students who participate in applied learning through internships or work-based learning experiences. The point is for states to be clear about the

content they expect students to learn, while leaving plenty of room for local educators to deliver the content in varied ways appropriate for the needs of students and schools.

One way states can approach this challenge is by establishing a model state curriculum that districts and schools can opt to use. In 2003, in response to educators who wanted more guidance about what to teach, Maryland developed the Voluntary State Curriculum, which defines what students need to know and be able to do in math, English, science and social studies at each grade level from prekindergarten through grade 8 and in high school. Although it is still too early to measure its effect, this strategy holds much promise.

States also may want to consider developing monitoring tools that will enable districts and schools to analyze course syllabi. California has taken this approach with its A–G college entrance requirements, which provide a framework for courses that the University of California requires for entry, a checklist of topics to be covered within each course and sample syllabi. These documents are available on the state Web site so that the requirements are public and transparent (see www.ucop.edu/doorways/guide/).

Teacher professional development that is closely tied to standards and course content is another critical means of providing guidance around what is most important to teach — and ensuring that teachers have the skills to do so. Districts should provide ongoing course-based professional development for teachers within and across schools to ensure a common understanding of the content they teach. In addition, they should provide professional development for cross-grade teams of teachers to help them develop a common vision of how core content develops through the grades.

States also can participate in the State Scholars Initiative, a business-led effort to provide incentives

to students who complete a college- and work-ready curriculum that includes three years of math (Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry); three years of science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics); four years of English; three and a half years of social studies, including economics; and two years of foreign language. Evidence from the past decade indicates that the program is having success in preparing more students to complete a college degree — and ultimately to earn a higher wage in the years after high school.¹⁵

■ Encourage students to go beyond the core.

Although all students should be required to take a core college- and work-ready curriculum, they also should be strongly encouraged to go beyond the core. Students should be encouraged to earn post-secondary credit while in high school through Advanced Placement courses and dual-enrollment programs or through early college high schools that aim to help students earn two years of college credit while also earning a high school diploma. These accelerated options should not be reserved for the most advanced or advantaged students. Lower-achieving students can benefit from participation in college-level courses, particularly if the courses are combined with extended academic supports, such as intensive assistance with math and literacy skills.

Interested students also should be encouraged to pursue rigorous career and technical programs. As an addition to, not a substitute for, rigorous core curricula, career and technical programs can provide students with interesting and engaging content, help them apply academic skills in real-world contexts, and help them develop and refine career aspirations.

■ Monitor results.

While ensuring that students take rigorous courses is important, it is equally important that states have mechanisms for determining whether students learn what is in those courses. As states strengthen high

school course-taking requirements, they also must build better data and assessment systems for monitoring student achievement.

To track student achievement and course-taking through K–12 and into postsecondary education, states should develop data systems with individual student identifiers. Colleges and universities then can report back on student performance in their math and English courses, so states and districts can make necessary adjustments to their course offerings and/or instruction. Colleges and universities also should report back to districts on the remediation, persistence and completion rates of their graduates so that schools and districts know how prepared their own graduates are for postsecondary education.

In Oregon, for example, every high school principal and counselor receives an annual report from the Oregon University System that describes the performance of their school's graduates (compared with all Oregon graduates) on college entry requirements, including the SAT and the state high school assessments. This *Freshman Profile Report* then details students' subsequent performance in their first year of college and their persistence to a second year. A Web site allows educators and the public to compare two years of *Freshman Profile Report* data for students from any high school in the state (see <http://pass.ous.edu/>).

States also should consider using end-of-course exams to ensure that course content is consistent and students across the state are learning the same material. Not only do such measures help make sure all students have equal opportunities, but if well constructed, they can allow states to assess more advanced content than is typically found on state exit exams. Some districts count students' scores on the end-of-course exams toward their final grades or report them on student transcripts, which can provide incentive for students — and their teachers — to take the tests seriously. But end-of-course exams do not need to have high stakes attached to be useful.

North Carolina and Indiana use them to provide information to schools and districts across the state regarding the extent to which students are learning the critical knowledge and skills they will need after high school.

Exit exams are yet another piece of a comprehensive assessment system. They establish a floor of performance that all students must meet to earn a diploma. As Achieve found in a recent study of six states' exit tests, most measure content that students study early in their high school careers — only a fraction of the knowledge and skills that colleges and employers say is essential. However, when strengthened and used in concert with end-of-course tests that assess higher-level content, exit exams can effectively establish a foundation of achievement for all students. (For more information on Achieve's exit exam study, go to www.achieve.org.)



The world that high school graduates enter today is very different from the one their parents faced decades ago. The economy has changed and so have the skills that are needed to be successful. Yet as the demands in the workplace and postsecondary institutions have grown, the expectations we have for high school graduates have not kept pace. The result is that the American high school diploma has lost its currency.

It is time to bring high school graduation requirements into the 21st century. All students deserve to take a challenging sequence of courses in high school, and earning a diploma should signify that students are ready for college or work. Most states have a long way to go to align their course-taking requirements with postsecondary demands, but the goal is within reach. States such as Arkansas, Indiana and Texas are illustrating what is possible when policymakers make a commitment to better preparing their graduates for success after high school. We hope that more states will follow their lead.

APPENDIX

Included in this appendix are the full set of course requirements for the Arkansas Smart Core, the Indiana Core 40 and the Texas Recommended High School Program. Students in these states are automatically enrolled in these "default curricula" unless they, along with their parents, decide to "opt out." Also included is the "opt-out" form that will be used in Arkansas.

For comparative purposes, note that one full year of study is equivalent to one unit in Arkansas, two credits in Indiana and one credit in Texas.

ARKANSAS STATE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS *(Applies to students entering grade 9 in 2006.)*

Discipline	Arkansas Smart Core
English	4 units (years) - English 9th grade - English 10th grade - English 11th grade - English 12th grade
Oral communication	1/2 unit (1/2 year)
Mathematics	4 units (years) - Algebra I or Algebra A and B (Grades 7-8 or 8-9) - Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A and B - Algebra II - Choice of: Transitions to College Math, Precalculus, Calculus, Trigonometry, Statistics, Computer Math, Algebra III or an Advanced Placement mathematics <i>(Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable.)</i>
Natural science	3 units (years) with lab experience chosen from - Physical Science - Biology or Applied Biology/Chemistry - Chemistry - Physics or Principles of Technology I and II or PIC Physics
Social studies	3 units (years) - Civics or Civics/American Government - World History - U.S. History
Physical education	1/2 unit (1/2 year)
Health and safety	1/2 unit (1/2 year)
Fine arts	1/2 unit (1/2 year)
Career focus	6 units
Total state credits required	22

Smart Core Informed Consent Form

Name of Student _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____

School _____

School Address _____

District _____

I have been informed of the Smart Core curriculum and the required course of study for graduation as well as the optional Common Core curriculum and course of study for graduation. This document indicates my choice of curriculum and course of study for graduation for the above named student.

Failure to complete the Smart Core curriculum for graduation *may* result in negative consequences such as conditional admission to college and ineligibility for scholarship programs.

Mark the choice selected with a checkmark:

☐ **I select Smart Core (22 units)**

English — 4 units (years)

- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

Oral Communications — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Mathematics — 4 units (years)

- Algebra I or Algebra A and B (Grades 7–8 or 8–9)
 - Geometry or Investigating Geometry or Geometry A and B
 - Algebra II
 - Choice of: Transitions to College Math, Precalculus, Calculus, Trigonometry, Statistics, Computer Math, Algebra III or an Advanced Placement mathematics
- (Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable.)

Natural Science — 3 units (years) with lab experience chosen from

- Physical Science
- Biology or Applied Biology/Chemistry
- Chemistry
- Physics or Principles of Technology I and II or PIC Physics

Social Studies — 3 units (years)

- Civics or Civics/American Government
- World History
- U.S. History

Physical Education — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Health and Safety — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Fine Arts — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Career Focus — 6 units

☐ **I select Common Core (22 units)**

English — 4 units (years)

- English 9th grade
- English 10th grade
- English 11th grade
- English 12th grade

Oral Communications — 1/2 unit

Mathematics — 4 units (years)

- Algebra or its equivalent* 1 unit
- Geometry or its equivalent* 1 unit
- All math units must build on the base of algebra and geometry knowledge and skills.
- Comparable concurrent credit college courses may be substituted where applicable.

*A two-year algebra equivalent or a two-year geometry equivalent may each be counted as two units of the four (4) unit requirement.

Science — 3 units (years)

- At least one (1) unit of Biology
- A Physical Science

Social Studies — 3 units (years)

- Civics or government, 1/2 unit
- World history 1 unit
- U.S. history 1 unit

Physical Education — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Health and Safety — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Fine Arts — 1/2 unit (1/2 year)

Career Focus — 6 units

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

School Official Signature _____

Date _____

INDIANA STATE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS *(Proposed for students beginning with the class of 2011.)*

Discipline	Indiana Core 40 Curriculum	
English/language arts	8 credits	Credits must include literature, composition and speech.
Mathematics	6 credits	- Algebra I* (2 credits) - Geometry* (2 credits) - Algebra II* (2 credits) <i>*or complete Integrated Math series I, II and III for 6 credits</i>
Science	6 credits	- Biology I (2 credits) - Chemistry I or Physics I or Integrated Chemistry-Physics (2 credits) - any Core 40 science course (2 credits)
Social studies	6 credits	- U.S. History (2 credits) - U.S. Government (1 credit) - Economics (1 credit) - World History/Civilization or Geography/History of the World (2 credits)
Flex credits	5 credits	- World Languages - Fine Arts - Career/Technical
Physical education	2 credits	
Health	1 credit	
Electives**	6 credits (Career Academic Sequence Recommended)	
Total state credits required	40	

***This specifies the number of electives required by the state. High school schedules provide time for many more electives during the high school years. All students are strongly encouraged to complete a Career Academic Sequence (selecting electives in a deliberate manner) to take full advantage of career exploration and preparation opportunities.*

Local schools may have additional requirements.

(State Board of Education final action anticipated 2/05)

TEXAS STATE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (*Applies to students entering grade 9 in 2004.*)

Discipline	Texas Recommended High School Program
English language arts*	Four credits: - English I, II, III and IV. - English I and II for Speakers of Other Languages may be substituted for English I and II only for immigrant students with limited English proficiency.
Mathematics*	Three credits must consist of: Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry.
Science*	Three credits. One credit must be a biology credit (Biology, AP Biology or IB Biology). Must choose the remaining two credits from the following areas. Not more than one credit may be chosen from each of the areas to satisfy this requirement. - Integrated Physics and Chemistry; - Chemistry, AP Chemistry or IB Chemistry; - Physics, Principles of Technology I, AP Physics or IB Physics. <i>Students are encouraged to take classes in biology, chemistry and physics.</i>
Social studies*	Three and one-half credits must consist of: - World History Studies (one credit); - World Geography Studies (one credit); - U.S. History Studies Since Reconstruction (one credit), and - U.S. Government (one-half credit).
Economics with emphasis on the free enterprise system and its benefits*	One-half credit
Physical education	One and one-half credits to include Foundations of Personal Fitness (one-half credit). (Limit two credits.) Can substitute: drill team, marching band, cheerleading, ROTC, athletics, Dance I-IV, approved private programs, or certain career and technology education courses.
Languages other than English*	Two credits must consist of Level I and Level II in the same language.
Health education	One-half credit or Health Science Technology (one credit).
Technology applications*	One credit For courses to satisfy this requirement, see §74.53 relating to Recommended High School Program for details.
Fine arts*	One credit , which may be satisfied by any course found in 19 TAC, Chapter 117.
Speech	One-half credit: Communication Applications
Program credits excluding electives	20
Additional components* (elective courses)	Three and one-half credits from: - the list of courses approved by the SBOE for grades 9-12 (relating to Essential Knowledge and Skills), - state-approved innovative courses, - JROTC (one to four credits), or - Driver Education (one-half credit).
Total program and elective credits	24

*College Board Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses may be substituted for requirements in appropriate areas.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Greene and Forster, *Public High School Graduation and College Readiness Rates in the United States*. Center for Civic Innovation, Manhattan Institute. Education Working Paper, No. 3: September 2003. Appendix Table 9.
- ² National Center for Education Statistics. *Access to Postsecondary Education for the 1992 High School Graduates*, October 1997, Table 2. NCES, *Remedial Education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions in Fall 2000*, November 2003, Table 4. NCES, *Condition of Education 2004*, Indicator 18, Supplemental Table 18-1.
- ³ National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education 2004*, Indicator 18.
- ⁴ Public Agenda. *Reality Check 2002*, 2002.
- ⁵ Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box: Academic Intensity, Attendance Patterns, and Bachelor's Degree Attainment*, June 1999. Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.
- ⁶ Adelman, et al., *Postsecondary Attainment, Attendance, Curriculum, and Performance: Selected Results From the NELS:88/2000 Postsecondary Education Transcript Study (PETS), 2000*, September 2003, Table 11.
- ⁷ Carnevale and Desrochers, Educational Testing Service, *Connecting Education Standards and Employment: Course-Taking Patterns of Young Workers*, American Diploma Project: Workplace Study, 2002.
- ⁸ ACT, *Crisis at the Core: Preparing All Students for College and Work*, October 2004.
- ⁹ Adelman, *Answers in the Tool Box*, June 1999.
- ¹⁰ National Center for Education Statistics, *Condition of Education 2004*, Indicator 22, Supplemental Table 22-2.
- ¹¹ Education Trust-West, *The A-G Curriculum: College-Prep? Work-Prep? Life-Prep. Understanding and Implementing a Rigorous Core Curriculum for All*, 2004.
- ¹² Eight states have diploma systems with two tiers, another eight states have three tiers and two have four tiers. Two additional three-tier diploma states — Delaware and Wyoming — differentiate their multiple diplomas not by more rigorous course requirements, but by different levels of student performance on state tests. Consequently, Delaware and Wyoming are not included in the course-related discussion of multidiploma states in this report.
- ¹³ The New York State Regents diploma requires no specific math courses, but student must pass the Math A end-of-course exam, which covers the first half of an integrated course sequence roughly equivalent to Algebra I and Geometry.
- ¹⁴ In Arkansas, the Smart Core diploma is both the default program of study and the top-tier diploma. In Indiana, the Core 40 is the default program of study, while the more rigorous Academic Honors diploma is the top-tier diploma.
- ¹⁵ Center for State Scholars, "Prepared High School Students Needed to Head Off Looming Skill and Labor Shortage," January 2004.

NDLA, S EDU

From: Flakoll, Tim
Sent: Wednesday, April 04, 2007 4:08 PM
To: NDLA, S EDU
Subject: FW: SB 2309 Background
Importance: High

From: Michel Hillman [mailto:michel.hillman@ndus.nodak.edu]
Sent: Thursday, March 29, 2007 6:09 PM
To: Flakoll, Tim
Cc: Decker, Anita K.; Dunn, Eddie; Schepp, Julie A.; Dave Nething; Hillman, Michel G.
Subject: SB 2309 Background
Importance: High

Senator Flakoll

I did not have a chance to attend the conference committee on SB 2309 or talk with you before the meeting. I am providing additional background that you may find useful for the conference committee discussion.

It is a myth to think that raising standards will cause more students to drop out of high school. Oklahoma is a great example of this. Standards were raised to 15 required units of core coursework. All students benefited but minority students benefited the most. Achievement, educational aspirations and college attendance all rose. College remediation dropped.
 Reference: <http://www.act.org/path/policy/pdf/oklahoma.pdf>

It is a myth to think that most students drop out of high school because they are not doing well academically.
 A January 2007 report indicates that the major reason students drop out of high school is because "they felt their classes were uninteresting and irrelevant", in other words, they were not being appropriately challenged: page 3 <http://www.all4ed.org/publications/HighCost.pdf>

After 9 months of intense discussion the P-16 Education Task Force could find no difference in requirements for high school graduates for preparation for college or preparation to directly enter the workforce. **The private sector members of the ETF insisted that high school graduates must be better prepared.** Joe Rothschilder indicated that Steffes Corporation must administer a basic mathematics test to recent high school graduates because the high school diploma in North Dakota does not currently indicate the student has basic math skills.

How do high school students feel?

"Graduates themselves say they would welcome more challenging requirements and raised expectations for high school graduation" Reference: last panel in <http://www.achieve.org/node/548>

Why is SB 2309 needed?

North Dakota is one of only seven states without state high school course graduation requirements (all adjacent states have them). See the "white hole" on pdf page 11 of 41 at <http://www.achieve.org/files/coursetaking.pdf>

4/4/2007

How can North Dakota go from the second highest math achievement in the country in the 8th grade (Reference pdf page 5 of 12: <http://www2.edtrust.org/edtrust/summaries2006/northdakota.pdf>) to high school graduate ACT Math score average just .6 points above (Reference pdf page 9 of 22: <http://www.act.org/news/data/06/pdf/states/Northdakota.pdf>) the national average? **Easy, just don't have any state high school curriculum requirements!** Without state requirements only 16% of North Dakota 8th graders take algebra compared to 35% in competitive top states. But the worst news is that this percentage has declined from 20% of 8th graders taking algebra in 1992. The momentum is in the wrong direction. BPS superintendent Dr. Paul Johnson describes this information as a "disconnect" with what is needed for success. Yes, course requirements are just seat time, but they send a loud and clear message: we now have expectations for all North Dakota high school students. We need these course requirements in place before we can move beyond seat time to competencies: course requirements will lead to the competency discussions we need.

Senator Flakoll, I have faith in North Dakota students and school administrators. Passing SB 2309 now for implementation in 2012 will not screen any students out of our education system. It will give us five years to implement an important, needed change. **Without this bill education quality will continue to decline.** This could be the most important piece of education policy to come out of the 2007 Legislative Session.

This information was pulled together quickly based on issues that I understand came up in the first conference committee discussion. I apologize for the informal structure and lack of polish but I wanted to get this information into your hands quickly. Please let me know if you have any trouble accessing any of the references.

Thanks

Mike

*The North Dakota University System
is the Vital Link to a Brighter Future*

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