

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5814

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As of March 3, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to school day requirements for graduating seniors.

**Brief Description:** Allowing a reduction in mandatory school days for graduating seniors when the school year is extended due to district-wide or school emergency closures.

**Sponsors:** Senators Brandland, Roach, Thibaudeau, Schmidt, Spanel, Honeyford, Jacobsen, Rasmussen, B. Sheldon and Winsley.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Education: 3/5/03.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Staff:** Susan Mielke (786-7422)

**Background:** The minimum school year must be 180 days in grades one through 12, and 180 half-days or its equivalent for kindergarten. Additionally, a school district's educational program must provide a district-wide average of at least 1,000 hours for grades one through 12 and 450 hours for kindergarten students. A school district may schedule the last five school days for noninstructional purposes for graduating high school students, which may include early release and the observance of graduation.

By rule, a school district may be excused from the 180 day and program offering requirements for up to three days per school year when a district or school closes due to unforeseen natural events, mechanical failures, or actions or inactions by one or more persons. If the emergency is substantiated and the school district makes a reasonable effort to make up all the school days and program offerings, then the school district will receive its full allocation of state moneys. In the 2002-03 school year, 19 schools were excused from the requirements.

Additionally, a school district may receive a waiver for the 180 day and program hour requirements if the waiver is necessary to implement a plan for restructuring the district's educational program.

**Summary of Bill:** When school is canceled due to a district or school emergency closure, graduating seniors may forgo up to five additional days of attending school. An emergency closure means that the district or school closes due to one or more unforeseen natural events, mechanical failures, or actions or inactions by one or more persons.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.