

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1714

As Passed House:
March 4, 2019

Title: An act relating to granting of high school diplomas by community or technical colleges.

Brief Description: Concerning community and technical colleges granting high school diplomas.

Sponsors: Representatives Entenman, Boehnke, Jinkins, Ortiz-Self, Bergquist, Pollet and Leavitt; by request of State Board for Community and Technical Colleges.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/14/19, 2/19/19 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 3/4/19, 97-0.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires a community or technical college to issue a high school diploma to an individual aged 16 through 20 who satisfactorily completes an associate degree, upon written request from the student.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 19 members: Representatives Santos, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Paul, Vice Chair; Steele, Ranking Minority Member; McCaslin, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Bergquist, Caldier, Callan, Corry, Harris, Kilduff, Kraft, Ortiz-Self, Rude, Stonier, Thai, Valdez and Ybarra.

Staff: Megan Wargacki (786-7194).

Background:

School districts must issue diplomas to students signifying graduation from high school upon the students' satisfactory completion of all local and state graduation requirements.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

A community or technical college (CTC) must issue a high school diploma to:

- an individual who satisfactorily meets the requirements for high school completion, subject to rules adopted by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education;
- an individual enrolled in the Running Start program (a program where a high school student can take classes at a CTC for dual credit) who satisfactorily completes an associate degree, upon written request from the student;
- an individual 21 years or older who satisfactorily completes an associate degree, upon written request from the student; and
- an individual who enrolls in a technical college for occupational and academic programs as a high school student who satisfactorily completes an associate degree, upon written request from the student.

Summary of Bill:

A community or technical college must issue a high school diploma to an individual aged 16 through 20 who satisfactorily completes an associate degree, upon written request from the student.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill should increase the number of graduates from high school in our communities. Students over age 21, younger students in Running Start, and students attending one of the state's three technical high schools can receive their high school diploma upon the completion of a two-year degree. This bill brings equity to students excluded from these categories who complete a two-year degree, particularly the Open Doors Youth Reengagement Program.

Holding a high school diploma can be essential to obtaining a high skill job and a better future. Many state and federal financial aid programs require a high school diploma or equivalent to qualify. All students face challenges when they start college, but students aged 16 through 21 in the Open Doors Youth Reengagement Program face additional barriers, such as unstable housing. Some students who earn their associate degrees are ready for a job or further education, but because they are not able to get their high school diploma until they turn age 21, they are prevented from pursuing these opportunities.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Entenman, prime sponsor; Troy Goracke, State Board of Community and Technical Colleges; and Carrie O'Brien and Kian Ford, Green River College-Open Doors.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.