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AN ACT
RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CHANGING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS
FOR STUDENTS ENTERING NINTH GRADE IN THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL
YEAR; PREPARING STUDENTS TO GRADUATE WITH A DIPLOMA OF
EXCELLENCE; ALIGNING NEXT-STEP PLANS TO GRADUATE PROFILES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws
1986, Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-13-1.1. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS--NEXT-STEP PLANS.--

A. The purpose of the New Mexico diploma of
excellence is to demonstrate that a student is ready for
success in post-secondary education, gainful employment and
citizenship and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong
learner. The purpose of the state's minimum graduation
requirements is to establish rigorous expectations to support
that success.

B. School districts and charter schools are
encouraged to make available courses and programs of study
that allow students to pursue a range of post-secondary
opportunities and workforce opportunities and gain knowledge
in entrepreneurship principles, as determined by the
student's next-step plan and the school district's or charter
school's graduate profile.

C. At the end of grades eight through eleven, each

1 student shall prepare an interim next-step plan that sets
2 forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high
3 school graduation. Each year's plan shall be aligned to the
4 graduate profile of the student's school district or charter
5 school, shall be completed on a department-approved template,
6 shall explain any differences from previous interim next-step
7 plans, shall be filed with the principal of the student's
8 high school and shall be signed by the student, the student's
9 parent and the student's guidance counselor or other school
10 official charged with coursework planning for the student.

11 D. Each student must complete a final next-step
12 plan during the senior year and prior to graduation. The
13 plan shall be aligned to the graduate profile of the
14 student's school district or charter school, shall be
15 completed on a department-approved template, shall be filed
16 with the principal of the student's high school and shall be
17 signed by the student, the student's parent and the student's
18 guidance counselor or other school official charged with
19 coursework planning for the student.

20 E. An individualized education plan that meets the
21 requirements of Subsections C and D of this section and that
22 meets all applicable transition and procedural requirements
23 of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
24 for a student with a disability shall satisfy the next-step
25 plan requirements of this section for that student.

1 F. A local school board or governing body of a
2 charter school shall ensure that each high school student
3 develops a next-step plan based on reports of college and
4 workplace readiness assessments, as available, and other
5 factors and is reasonably informed about:

6 (1) curricular and course options, including
7 honors or advanced placement courses, international
8 baccalaureate courses, dual-credit courses, distance learning
9 courses, career clusters and career pathways, pre-
10 apprenticeship programs or remediation programs that the
11 college and workplace readiness assessments indicate to be
12 appropriate;

13 (2) opportunities available that lead to
14 different post-high-school options; and

15 (3) alternative opportunities available if
16 the student does not finish a planned curriculum.

17 G. The secretary shall:

18 (1) establish specific accountability
19 standards for administrators, counselors, teachers and other
20 appropriate school district or charter school employees to
21 ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop a
22 next-step plan;

23 (2) promulgate rules for accredited private
24 schools in order to ensure substantial compliance with the
25 provisions of this section;

1 (3) monitor compliance with the requirements
2 of this section; and

3 (4) compile such information as is necessary
4 to evaluate the success of next-step plans and report
5 annually, by December 15, to the legislative education study
6 committee and the governor.

7 H. Once a student has entered ninth grade, the
8 graduation requirements shall not be changed for that student
9 from the requirements specified in the law at the time the
10 student entered ninth grade.

11 I. For students entering the ninth grade beginning
12 in the 2009-2010 school year, at least one of the units
13 required for graduation shall be earned as an advanced
14 placement or honors course, a dual-credit course offered in
15 cooperation with an institution of higher education or a
16 distance learning course.

17 J. The department shall establish a procedure for
18 students to be awarded credit through completion of specified
19 career technical education for certain graduation
20 requirements, and districts may choose to allow students who
21 successfully complete an industry-recognized credential,
22 certificate or degree to receive additional weight in the
23 calculation of the student's grade point average.

24 K. Successful completion of the requirements of
25 the New Mexico diploma of excellence shall be required for

1 graduation for students entering the ninth grade beginning in
2 the 2009-2010 school year. Successful completion of a
3 minimum of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic
4 content and performance standards shall be required to earn a
5 New Mexico diploma of excellence. These units shall be as
6 follows:

7 (1) four units in English, with major
8 emphasis on grammar, nonfiction writing and literature;
9 provided that department-approved work-based training or
10 career and technical education courses that meet state
11 English academic content performance standards shall qualify
12 as one of the four required English units;

13 (2) four units in mathematics, of which one
14 shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of
15 algebra 2, unless the parent submitted written, signed
16 permission for the student to complete a lesser mathematics
17 unit; and provided that a financial literacy course or
18 department-approved work-based training or career and
19 technical education course that meets state mathematics
20 academic content and performance standards shall qualify as
21 one of the four required mathematics units;

22 (3) three units in science, two of which
23 shall have a laboratory component; provided that department-
24 approved work-based training or career and technical
25 education courses that meet state science academic content

1 and performance standards shall qualify as one of the three
2 required science units;

3 (4) three and one-half units in social
4 science, which shall include United States history and
5 geography, world history and geography, government and
6 economics and one-half unit of New Mexico history;

7 (5) one unit in physical education, as
8 determined by each school district or charter school, which
9 may include a physical education program that meets state
10 content and performance standards or participation in
11 marching band, junior reserve officers' training corps or
12 interscholastic sports sanctioned by the New Mexico
13 activities association or any other co-curricular physical
14 activity;

15 (6) one unit in one of the following: a
16 career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language
17 other than English; and

18 (7) seven and one-half elective units that
19 meet department content and performance standards. Career
20 and technical education courses shall be offered as an
21 elective. Student service learning shall be offered as an
22 elective. Financial literacy shall be offered as an
23 elective. Pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as
24 electives. Media literacy may be offered as an elective.

25 L. For students entering the eighth grade in the

1 2012-2013 school year, one-half unit in health education is
2 required prior to graduation. Health education may be
3 required in either middle school or high school, as
4 determined by the school district or charter school. Health
5 education courses shall include:

6 (1) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault
7 awareness and prevention training that meets department
8 standards developed in consultation with the federal centers
9 for disease control and prevention that are based on
10 evidence-based methods that have proven to be effective; and

11 (2) lifesaving skills training that follows
12 nationally recognized guidelines for hands-on psychomotor
13 skills cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Students
14 shall be trained to recognize the signs of a heart attack,
15 use an automated external defibrillator and perform the
16 Heimlich maneuver for choking victims. The secretary shall
17 promulgate rules to provide for the:

18 (a) use of the following instructors
19 for the training provided pursuant to this paragraph: 1)
20 school nurses, health teachers and athletic department
21 personnel as instructors; and 2) any qualified persons
22 volunteering to provide training at no cost to the school
23 district or charter school that the school district or
24 charter school determines to be eligible to offer instruction
25 pursuant to this paragraph; and

1 (b) approval of training and
2 instructional materials related to the training established
3 pursuant to this paragraph in both English and Spanish.

4 M. For students entering the ninth grade in the
5 2017-2018 school year and subsequent school years:

6 (1) one of the units in mathematics required
7 by Paragraph (2) of Subsection K of this section may comprise
8 a computer science course if the course is not used to
9 satisfy any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph
10 (3) of that subsection; and

11 (2) one of the units in science required by
12 Paragraph (3) of Subsection K of this section may comprise a
13 computer science course if the course is not used to satisfy
14 any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph (2) of
15 that subsection.

16 N. Final examinations shall be administered to all
17 students in all classes offered for credit.

18 O. Beginning with students entering the ninth
19 grade in the 2025-2026 school year, successful completion of
20 a minimum of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic
21 content and performance standards shall be required for
22 graduation and the award of a diploma of excellence. These
23 units shall be as follows:

24 (1) four units in English, which shall
25 include a three-unit sequence; provided that department-

1 approved work-based learning, career technical education or
2 English language development courses that meet state English
3 or English language development academic content and
4 performance standards may qualify as required English units;

5 (2) four units in mathematics, two of which
6 shall include a sequence of algebra 1 and geometry or another
7 integrated pathway of mathematics equivalent to algebra 1 and
8 geometry; provided that financial literacy courses or
9 department-approved work-based learning or career technical
10 education courses that meet state mathematics academic
11 content and performance standards may qualify as required
12 mathematics units; and provided further that algebra 2 shall
13 be offered as a mathematics course;

14 (3) three units in science, two of which
15 shall have a laboratory component; provided that department-
16 approved work-based learning or career technical education
17 courses that meet state science academic content and
18 performance standards may qualify as required science units;

19 (4) four units in social science, which
20 shall include United States history and geography, which
21 course content contains New Mexico history; government and
22 economics and personal financial literacy, which course
23 content contains civics; and world history and geography;

24 (5) one unit in physical education, as
25 determined by the school district or charter school, which

1 may include a physical education program that meets state
2 academic content and performance standards or participation
3 in marching band, dance programs, junior reserve officers'
4 training corps or interscholastic sports sanctioned by the
5 New Mexico activities association or any other co-curricular
6 physical activity;

7 (6) one-half unit in health education;
8 provided that this one-half unit may be earned in either
9 middle or high school;

10 (7) five and one-half elective units that
11 meet department academic content and performance standards
12 and that shall include a two-unit pathway concentration of
13 the student's choice in a language other than English,
14 including American sign language; fine arts; health; military
15 career preparation; a career technical education program; or
16 community or service learning, a capstone course or work-
17 based learning; provided that financial literacy, computer
18 science, student service learning, career technical education
19 courses and a sequence of languages other than English shall
20 be offered as electives; and provided further that media
21 literacy and pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as
22 electives; and

23 (8) two units set by each local school board
24 or governing body of a charter school that meet department
25 academic content and performance standards.

1 P. If a high school student who has taken one or
2 both units provided in Paragraph (8) of Subsection O of this
3 section moves from one school district or charter school to
4 another, the receiving school district or charter school
5 shall accept those earned units toward the student's
6 graduation.

7 Q. For students entering the ninth grade in the
8 2025-2026 school year, one-half unit of health education is
9 required prior to graduation. Health education courses shall
10 include:

11 (1) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault
12 awareness and prevention training that meets department
13 standards developed in consultation with the federal centers
14 for disease control and prevention that are based on
15 evidence-based methods that have proven to be effective; and

16 (2) lifesaving skills training that follows
17 nationally recognized guidelines for hands-on psychomotor
18 skills cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Students
19 shall be trained to recognize the signs of a heart attack,
20 use an automated external defibrillator and perform the
21 Heimlich maneuver for choking victims. The secretary shall
22 promulgate rules to provide for the:

23 (a) use of the following instructors
24 for the training provided pursuant to this paragraph: 1)
25 school nurses, health teachers and athletic department

1 personnel as instructors; and 2) any qualified persons
2 volunteering to provide training at no cost to the school
3 district that the school district determines to be eligible
4 to offer instruction pursuant to this paragraph; and

5 (b) approval of training and
6 instructional materials related to the training established
7 pursuant to this paragraph in both English and Spanish.

8 R. Nothing in the minimum graduation requirements
9 specified in Subsection O of this section affects:

10 (1) a school district's or charter school's
11 authority to require more units for graduation than provided
12 in this section; or

13 (2) a student's opportunity to take advanced
14 placement or honors courses, international baccalaureate
15 courses or distance learning courses offered by the public
16 school or dual credit courses offered in cooperation with
17 institutions of higher education.

18 S. Subject to the department's academic content
19 and performance standards and other provisions of this
20 section, every school district and charter school shall
21 develop a graduate profile:

22 (1) that is specific to each community;

23 (2) that articulates the core academic
24 competencies and subjects that are key to graduates' post-
25 high-school success; and

1 (3) to which required units are aligned.

2 T. Units earned in health, algebra 1 and geometry
3 prior to enrolling in high school shall satisfy unit
4 requirements required to earn a New Mexico diploma of
5 excellence.

6 U. The department shall adopt and promulgate rules
7 to implement graduation requirements by no later than
8 December 31, 2024. The rules shall include revisions to
9 expand course offerings so that students have access to a
10 range of rigorous academic options and career technical
11 education courses and to establish guidance for the
12 development of graduate profiles.

13 V. As used in this section:

14 (1) "capstone course" means a multifaceted
15 academic and intellectual experience that may take a wide
16 variety of forms and that culminates in a final product,
17 performance or presentation explaining how the final product,
18 performance or presentation explicates the chosen course to
19 an evaluation panel convened by the public school to evaluate
20 the quality of course and the final product, performance or
21 presentation;

22 (2) "career technical education" means
23 organized programs offering a sequence of courses, including
24 technical education and applied technology education, that
25 are directly related to the preparation of students for paid

1 or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations
2 requiring an industry-recognized credential, certificate or
3 degree;

4 (3) "career technical education course"
5 means a course with content that provides technical
6 knowledge, skills and competency-based applied learning and
7 that aligns with educational standards and expectations as
8 defined in rule;

9 (4) "career cluster" means a grouping of
10 occupations in industry sectors based on recognized
11 commonalities that provide an organizing tool for developing
12 instruction within the educational system;

13 (5) "career pathways" means a sub-grouping
14 used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and
15 instruction of occupations and career specialities that share
16 a set of common knowledge and skills for career success;

17 (6) "final next-step plan" means a next-step
18 plan that shows that the student has committed or intends to
19 commit in the near future to a four-year college or
20 university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational
21 program, an internship or apprenticeship, military service or
22 a job;

23 (7) "graduate profile" means a document that
24 a school district or charter school uses to specify the
25 cognitive, personal and interpersonal competencies that

1 students should have when they graduate;

2 (8) "interim next-step plan" means an annual
3 next-step plan in which the student specifies post-high-
4 school goals and sets forth the coursework that will allow
5 the student to achieve those goals; and

6 (9) "next-step plan" means an annual
7 personal written plan of studies developed by a student in a
8 public school or other state-supported school or institution
9 in consultation with the student's parent and school
10 counselor or other school official charged with coursework
11 planning for the student that includes one or more of the
12 following:

13 (a) advanced placement, international
14 baccalaureate or honors courses;

15 (b) dual-credit courses offered in
16 cooperation with an institution of higher education;

17 (c) distance learning courses;

18 (d) career technical education or work-
19 based learning courses; and

20 (e) pre-apprenticeship programs.

21 W. The secretary may establish a policy to provide
22 for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and
23 testing provisions of the Public School Code."

24 SECTION 2. REPEAL.--Section 22-13-1.2 NMSA 1978 (being
25 Laws 2003, Chapter 153, Section 59) is repealed. _____