2015 ASSEMBLY BILL 194

May 4, 2015 - Introduced by Representatives EDMING, R. BROOKS, KAPENGA, KNUDSON, MURPHY and A. OTT, cosponsored by Senator WANGGAARD. Referred to Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations.

AN ACT to amend 115.29 (4) (a), 118.33 (1) (a) (intro.), 118.33 (1) (f) 1., 118.33 (1)
(f) 2., 118.33 (1) (f) 2m., 118.33 (1) (f) 2r., 118.33 (2) (c), 118.33 (3m), 120.13 (37)
(a) (intro.) and 120.13 (37) (b); and to create 118.33 (1) (d) 3., 118.33 (1) (g) 1.

1 d. and 118.33 (1m) of the statutes; relating to: requiring the successful
completion of the civics portion of a citizenship test as a condition for obtaining
a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

This bill requires a person to correctly answer at least 60 of 100 questions on
a civics test, which is identical to the civics test required to be taken by persons
seeking U.S. citizenship, as a prerequisite to obtaining a high school diploma or a
high school equivalency diploma. The bill prohibits a school board, the operator of
an independent charter school, and the governing body of a private school
participating in a parental choice program from granting a diploma to a pupil
attending a public school, independent charter school, or participating private school
unless the pupil has successfully completed the test. The bill permits the person to
retake the test until the person has obtained a passing score. The requirement first applies in the 2016-17 school year.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 115.29 (4) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

115.29 (4) (a) Grant declarations of equivalency of high school graduation to persons, an individual if the individual has successfully completed the civics test required under s. 118.33 (1m) (a) and if, in the state superintendent’s judgment they have, the individual has presented satisfactory evidence of having completed a recognized high school course of study or its equivalent. The state superintendent may establish the standards by which high school graduation equivalency is determined. Such standards may consist of evidence of high school courses completed in high schools recognized by the proper authorities as accredited, results of examinations given by or at the request of the state superintendent, successful completion of correspondence study courses given by acceptable correspondence study schools, a general educational development certificate of high school equivalency issued by an agency of the U.S. government, course credits received in schools meeting the approval of the state superintendent, or other standards established by the state superintendent.

SECTION 2. 118.33 (1) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (1) (a) (intro.) Except as provided in pars. (d), (e), and (em), a school board may not grant a high school diploma to any pupil unless the pupil satisfies the requirement under sub. (1m) (a) and has earned:

SECTION 3. 118.33 (1) (d) 3. of the statutes is created to read:

118.33 (1) (d) 3. The pupil satisfies the requirement under sub. (1m) (a).
SECTION 4. 118.33 (1) (f) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (1) (f) 1. By September 1, 2004, each school board operating high school grades shall develop and periodically review and revise a written policy specifying criteria for granting a high school diploma that are in addition to the requirements under par. (a). The criteria shall include the pupil’s academic performance, successful completion of the civics test under sub. (1m) (a), and the recommendations of teachers. Except as provided in subds. 2. and 4., the criteria apply to pupils enrolled in charter schools located in the school district.

SECTION 5. 118.33 (1) (f) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (1) (f) 2. By September 1, 2004, each operator of a charter school under s. 118.40 (2r) that operates high school grades shall develop and periodically review and revise a policy specifying criteria for granting a high school diploma. The criteria shall include the pupil’s academic performance, successful completion of the civics test under sub. (1m) (a), and the recommendations of teachers.

SECTION 6. 118.33 (1) (f) 2m. of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (1) (f) 2m. The governing body of each private school participating in the program under s. 119.23 shall develop and periodically review and revise a policy specifying criteria for granting a high school diploma to pupils attending the private school under s. 119.23. The criteria shall include the pupil’s academic performance, successful completion of the civics test under sub. (1m) (a), and the recommendations of teachers.

SECTION 7. 118.33 (1) (f) 2r. of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (1) (f) 2r. The governing body of each private school participating in the program under s. 118.60 shall develop and periodically review and revise a policy specifying criteria for granting a high school diploma to pupils attending the private school...
school under s. 118.60. The criteria shall include the pupil’s academic performance, successful completion of the civics test under sub. (1m) (a), and the recommendations of teachers.

**SECTION 8.** 118.33 (1) (g) 1. d. of the statutes is created to read:

118.33 (1) (g) 1. d. Satisfies the requirement under sub. (1m) (a).

**SECTION 9.** 118.33 (1m) of the statutes is created to read:

118.33 (1m) (a) Beginning in the 2016–17 school year, no school board, operator of a charter school under s. 118.40 (2r), or governing body of a private school participating in a program under s. 118.60 or 119.23 may grant a high school diploma to any pupil unless, subject to the policies under sub. (2) (m), the pupil takes, during the high school grades, a civics test comprised of 100 questions that are identical to the 100 questions that may be asked of an individual during the process of applying for U.S. citizenship by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services and the pupil correctly answers at least 60 of those questions.

(b) A pupil may retake the exam described under par. (a) until the pupil obtains the passing score required under par. (a).

**SECTION 10.** 118.33 (2) (c) of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (2) (c) Establish course requirements under sub. (1) (a) and approve any school board’s high school graduation standards policy that is equivalent to the requirements under sub. subs. (1) and (1m) (a).

**SECTION 11.** 118.33 (3m) of the statutes is amended to read:

118.33 (3m) A course taken at a technical college by a child attending the school part–time or in lieu of high school under s. 118.15 (1) (b), or attending the school under s. 118.15 (1) (cm), does not fulfill any of the high school graduation requirements under sub. (1) (a) unless the state superintendent has approved the
course for that purpose. If a pupil satisfies all of the high school graduation requirements under sub. subs. (1) and (1m) (a), the school board shall grant a high school diploma to the pupil regardless of whether the pupil satisfied all or a portion of the requirements while attending an institution of higher education under s. 118.55 or a technical college.

SECTION 12. 120.13 (37) (a) (intro.) of the statutes is amended to read:

120.13 (37) (a) (intro.) Notwithstanding s. 118.33 (1) and (1m), award a high school diploma to a person who meets all of the following requirements:

SECTION 13. 120.13 (37) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

120.13 (37) (b) Award Notwithstanding s. 118.33 (1m), award a high school diploma to a person who received a high school equivalency diploma under s. 115.29 (4) after serving on active duty under honorable conditions if the person meets the conditions of par. (a) 1. to 3.

(END)