

STATE OF NEW YORK

2261

2017-2018 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

January 17, 2017

Introduced by M. of A. PEOPLES-STOKES, BENEDETTO, RIVERA -- read once
and referred to the Committee on Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to establishing an accelerated high school graduation program

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as
2 "the New York accelerated high school graduation option act".

3 § 2. The education law is amended by adding a new article 67 to read
4 as follows:

ARTICLE 67

THE NEW YORK ACCELERATED HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION OPTION ACT

Section 3400. Legislative findings.

3401. Definitions.

3402. Accelerated high school graduation option act.

3403. Eligibility requirements.

11 § 3400. Legislative findings. The legislature hereby finds that it is
12 necessary for the state's citizens to acquire an education beyond the
13 secondary level in order to succeed during the twenty-first century. The
14 legislature also finds that New York state has one of the highest aver-
15 age tuitions among public community colleges in the country and the
16 smallest percentages of enrollments in public community colleges versus
17 private four year institutions. The legislature further finds that
18 community colleges strengthen New York's economy by providing students
19 with educational training and experience which ensures a highly produc-
20 tive, well-trained, work force. The legislature therefore enacts "the
21 New York accelerated high school graduation option act" in order to help
22 high achieving high school students pursue a post-secondary education.

23 § 3401. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms
24 shall have the following meanings:

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 1. "Community colleges" means colleges established and operated pursu-
2 ant to the provisions of article one hundred twenty-six of this chapter,
3 either individually or jointly, by counties, cities, intermediate school
4 districts, school districts approved by the state university trustees,
5 or individually by community college regions approved by the state
6 university trustees, and providing two-year post secondary programs
7 pursuant to regulations prescribed by the state university trustees and
8 receiving financial assistance from the state therefor;

9 2. "Standardized test" or "test" means any test that is given in New
10 York at the expense of the test subject and designed for use and used
11 solely for placement, credit-by-examination or other nonadmission
12 purpose or any test developed and administered by an individual school
13 or institution solely for its own purposes or any test, or portion of a
14 test, designed to evaluate manual skills or other physical abilities;
15 and

16 3. "Commissioner" means the commissioner of education of the state of
17 New York.

18 § 3402. Accelerated high school graduation option act. 1. There is
19 hereby created "the New York accelerated high school graduation option
20 act". It shall be the duty of the commissioner, or his or her designee,
21 to administer the program.

22 2. Students who enter grade nine in the two thousand seventeen--two
23 thousand eighteen school year and thereafter may select, upon receipt of
24 each student and parent's consent to complete high school in three
25 years, instead of the required four years mandated by the department
26 shall become eligible to receive a scholarship to cover the full cost of
27 tuition at a New York community college. The scholarship amount shall
28 not, when combined with any other financial assistance, exceed the
29 student's actual cost of attendance at the community college where the
30 scholarship is used. If the student chooses the option to graduate high
31 school in four years pursuant to the requirements mandated by the
32 department, the option for a scholarship to receive free tuition at a
33 New York community college will not be available.

34 3. Beginning with the two thousand eighteen--two thousand nineteen
35 school year, each district school board shall provide each student in
36 grades six through nine and their parents with information concerning
37 the three-year and four-year high school graduation options. The infor-
38 mation must include a timeframe for achieving each graduation option.

39 4. Selection of one of the graduation options must be completed by the
40 student prior to the end of grade nine and is exclusively up to the
41 student and parent. Each district school board shall establish policies
42 for extending this deadline to the end of a student's first semester of
43 grade ten for a student who entered a New York state public school after
44 grade nine upon transfer from a private school or another state or who
45 was prevented from choosing a graduation option due to illness during
46 grade nine. If the student and parent fail to select a graduation
47 option, the student shall be considered to have selected the standard
48 four year program.

49 § 3403. Eligibility requirements. 1. Students first entering grade
50 nine in the two thousand seventeen--two thousand eighteen school year
51 and thereafter must earn at least twenty-two units of credit including
52 two credits in physical education, in compliance with the New York state
53 regents, in order to receive a regents diploma.

54 (a) English, four units of credit;

1 (b) Social studies, four units of credit as set forth in paragraph (6)
2 of Section 100.5 Diploma requirements set forth with the New York State
3 Board of Regents;

4 (c) Science, three units of credit of commencement level science, at
5 least one course shall be life sciences and at least one in the physical
6 sciences, the third may be either life sciences or physical sciences;

7 (d) Mathematics, three units of credit of mathematics, which shall be
8 at a more advanced level than grade eight and shall meet commencement-
9 level learning standards as determined by the commissioner;

10 (e) Visual arts and/or music, dance, or theatre, one unit of credit;
11 and

12 (f) Health education, one-half unit of credit in accordance with
13 learning standards in the area of parenting being attained through
14 either the health or family and consumer sciences programs or a separate
15 course.

16 2. Prior to selecting a program, a student and the student's parent
17 must meet with designated school personnel to receive an explanation of
18 the relative requirements, advantages, and disadvantages of the program,
19 and the student must also receive the written consent of the student's
20 parent.

21 3. Students pursuing accelerated three-year high school graduation
22 must:

23 (a) Earn passing scores on all regents exams, standardized tests, or
24 teacher given final exams in order to receive credit toward the acceler-
25 ated degree; and

26 (b) Achieve a cumulative weighted grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0
27 scale, or its equivalent, in the courses required for the career prepar-
28 atory accelerated three-year high school graduation option pursuant to
29 this article.

30 4. If, at the end of grade ten, a student is not on track to meet the
31 credit, assessment, or grade point average requirements of the acceler-
32 ated graduation option selected, the school shall notify the student and
33 parent of the following:

34 (a) The requirements that the student is not currently meeting;

35 (b) The specific performance necessary in grade eleven for the student
36 to meet the accelerated graduation requirements; and

37 (c) The right of the student to change to the four-year program.

38 5. A student who selected one of the accelerated three-year graduation
39 options shall automatically move to the four-year program if the
40 student:

41 (a) Exercises his or her right to change to the four-year program; and

42 (b) Fails to earn five credits by the end of grade nine or fails to
43 earn eleven credits by the end of grade ten.

44 6. A student who meets all requirements shall be awarded a regents
45 diploma in a form prescribed by the state board of education.

46 7. (a) A student shall be eligible for a scholarship upon completion
47 of high school within three years according to the requirements of this
48 article. The scholarship shall cover the cost of up to five semesters of
49 tuition and approved fees at a New York community college.

50 (b) To be eligible to receive such scholarship a student shall:

51 (i) be a United States citizen or have permanent resident status in
52 the New York county where the community college is located;

53 (ii) have completed high school within three years according to the
54 requirements of this act;

55 (iii) be enrolled in an associate degree program for a minimum of
56 twelve credit hours and a maximum of fifteen credit hours per semester

1 at the community college, not including any credit hours in a remedial
2 or developmental curriculum;

3 (iv) have maintained continuous full-time enrollment at the New York
4 community college; and

5 (v) have applied for all other available forms of state and federal
6 financial aid, exclusive of loans.

7 § 3. This act shall take effect April 1, 2017; provided, however, that
8 effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule
9 or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective
10 date are authorized and directed to be made and completed on or
11 before such effective date.