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HOUSE BILL NO. 1464

Offered January 8, 2003

Prefiled December 3, 2002

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 22.1-253.13:4 and 22.1-254.2 of the Code of Virginia, relating to general educational development (GED) certificates.

Patron—Carrico

Referred to Committee on Education

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 22.1-253.13:4 and 22.1-254.2 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 22.1-253.13:4. Standard 4. Diplomas and certificates; class rankings.

A. Each local school board shall award diplomas to all secondary school students, including students who transfer from nonpublic schools or from home instruction, who earn the units of credit prescribed by the Board of Education, pass the prescribed tests, and meet such other requirements as may be prescribed by the local school board and approved by the Board of Education. Provisions shall be made for students who transfer between secondary schools and from nonpublic schools or from home instruction as outlined in the standards for accreditation. Further, reasonable accommodation to meet the requirements for diplomas shall be provided for otherwise qualified students with disabilities as needed.

In addition, each local school board may devise, vis-a-vis the award of diplomas to secondary school students, a mechanism for calculating class rankings that takes into consideration whether the student has taken a required class more than one time and has had any prior earned grade for such required class expunged.

B. Students identified as disabled who complete the requirements of their individualized education programs shall be awarded special diplomas by local school boards.

C. Students who have completed a prescribed course of study as defined by the local school board shall be awarded certificates by local school boards if they do not qualify for diplomas.

D. The Board of Education shall develop criteria for recognizing exemplary performance in career and technical education programs by students who have completed the requirements for a standard or advanced studies diploma and shall award seals on the diplomas of students meeting such criteria.

E. The Board shall establish, by regulation, requirements for the award of a special high school diploma for those students who have achieved a passing score on the general educational development (GED) examination. No person who has been awarded such special diploma shall be eligible to receive an additional diploma from any school division in the Commonwealth.

§ 22.1-254.2. Testing for general educational development; eligibility; guidelines.

A. The Board of Education shall establish a program of testing for general educational development (GED) through which persons may earn a high school equivalency certificate and a special high school diploma, as provided in § 22.1-253.13:4. The following persons may participate in the testing program:

1. Persons who are at least ~~eighteen~~ 19 years of age and not enrolled in public school or not otherwise meeting the school attendance requirements set forth in § 22.1-254;

2. Persons ~~sixteen~~ 16 years of age or older who have been instructed by their parents in their home pursuant to § 22.1-254.1 and who have completed such home school instruction;

3. Persons who have been excused from school attendance pursuant to subsections B and C of § 22.1-254; and

4. Persons for whom an individual student alternative education plan has been granted pursuant to subsection D of § 22.1-254; and

5. Persons 16 years of age and older who are enrolled in the Job Corps program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220) or another education and training program designated by the Board of Education and approved by the State Workforce Investment Board.

Under no circumstances shall persons under the age of ~~sixteen~~ 16 be eligible for the testing program.

Persons taking the GED examination must have been a resident of the Commonwealth for at least three months prior to making application to take the examination. The Superintendent of Public Instruction may grant waivers from this requirement, upon written request from the applicant, in accordance with Board regulations. The residency requirement shall not apply to persons enrolled in the Job Corps program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor pursuant to the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-220) or another education and training program designated by the

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59 *Board of Education and approved by the State Workforce Investment Board.*

60 *The Board shall promulgate regulations for the administration of the program, which shall address*
61 *residency requirements and waiver procedures, test security, and other matters as the Board deems*
62 *appropriate.*

63 B. From such funds as may be appropriated for this purpose, local school boards shall implement
64 programs of preparation and testing for general educational development consistent with guidelines to be
65 developed by the Board of Education. Such guidelines shall include a provision that allows preparatory
66 and testing programs to be offered jointly by two or more school boards.