

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 1997 RECONVENED SESSION

CHAPTER 835

An Act to amend and reenact § 22.1-253.13:4 of the Code of Virginia, relating to the Literacy Passport Test.

[H 1960]

Approved April 2, 1997

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

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

§ 22.1-253.13:4. Standard 4. Literacy Passports, diplomas and certificates.

A. The General Assembly and the Board of Education recognize the need to reduce the illiteracy rate in the Commonwealth and the need to prescribe requirements for completion of high school programs. To this end, the General Assembly and the Board hereby establish the requirement for a Literacy Passport for all students prior to grade nine and criteria for diplomas and certificates.

B. Each local school board shall award Literacy Passports to all students, including students with disabilities, who achieve passing scores on the literacy tests established by the Board of Education. Reasonable accommodation to take the literacy tests shall be provided as needed for students with disabilities. In order to be classified as a ninth ~~grader~~ *graders* or above, students shall be required to obtain a Literacy Passport, except for those (i) students who are identified as disabled pursuant to Board regulations governing special education programs for students with disabilities in Virginia and (ii) students for whom English is not the first or native language who have been identified as having limited English proficiency and who have been enrolled in a public school in the Commonwealth for less than three years. To remain classified as a ninth ~~grader~~ *graders* or above, such students identified as having limited English proficiency must achieve passing scores on the first literacy tests administered after three years of enrollment in a public school in the Commonwealth.

C. 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 literacy 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.

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

E. 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.