

1 H.285

2 Introduced by Representatives Dickinson of St. Albans Town, Cupoli of
3 Rutland City, Juskiewicz of Cambridge, Krebs of South Hero,
4 Morrissey of Bennington, Russell of Rutland City, Strong of
5 Albany, and Trieber of Rockingham

6 Referred to Committee on

7 Date:

8 Subject: Education; secondary schools; graduation; assessment

9 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the
10 State Board of Education to establish a program to award a Vermont
11 Governor's Diploma to secondary students who attain a high level of academic
12 achievement as demonstrated by both the rigor of academic coursework and
13 performance on State Board of Education-approved final examinations.

14 An act relating to the Vermont Governor's Diploma

15 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

16 Sec. 1. 16 V.S.A. § 165a is added to read:

17 § 165a. VERMONT GOVERNOR'S DIPLOMA

18 (a) The State Board shall adopt rules pursuant to 3 V.S.A. chapter 25 to
19 establish and administer a program to award a Vermont Governor's Diploma to
20 each Vermont secondary student who attains a high level of academic

1 achievement as demonstrated by both the rigor of the student's academic
2 coursework and his or her performance on final examinations approved by the
3 State Board program. The program shall include:

4 (1) rigorous, objective, statewide academic examinations that are
5 aligned with the standards adopted under subdivision 164(9) of this title in:

6 (A) mathematics, English language arts, and science; and

7 (B) foreign languages, U.S. history and government, world history,
8 and geography;

9 (2) a requirement that the examinations, which are subject matter
10 evaluations, are administered as the final assessment required by the school at
11 the completion of related coursework;

12 (3) minimum examination scores and other criteria necessary to achieve
13 a Vermont Governor's Diploma; and

14 (4) a process by which a student may submit his or her high school
15 transcript, which shall include scores received for each examination completed,
16 to the University of Vermont and any of the Vermont State Colleges in lieu of
17 other standardized college admission test results.

18 (b) The State Board may adopt rules that establish:

19 (1) additional criteria for awarding other types of Governor's Diplomas,
20 such as a Governor's Diploma with honors or a Governor's Diploma with a
21 career technical education certification;

1 (2) alternative criteria or methods of assessment, or both, for students
2 with disabilities and students who are English language learners.

3 (c) The State Board shall ensure that the final examinations required under
4 this section are available on at least an annual basis to each Vermont secondary
5 student, including a student enrolled in a home study program, who wishes to
6 be assessed. Satisfactory completion of one or more of the examinations is not
7 required for graduation from secondary school except to the extent that an
8 examination is the school district's final assessment for a particular course.

9 Sec. 2. REPORTS

10 On or before January 15, 2016, the State Board of Education shall submit a
11 written report to the House and Senate Committees on Education setting out
12 the details of the program established in Sec. 1 of this act and identifying any
13 legislation that may be necessary for full implementation. Notwithstanding the
14 provisions of 2 V.S.A. § 20(d), the State Board shall submit a status report
15 annually to both Committees from January 2017 through January 2023.

16 Sec. 3. IMPLEMENTATION

17 (a) Annual examinations in the subjects areas identified in Sec. 1 of this
18 act, 16 V.S.A. § 165a(a)(1)(A) (mathematics, English language arts, and
19 science), shall be administered beginning in the 2017–2018 academic year.

20 (b) Annual examinations in the subjects areas identified in Sec. 2 of this
21 act, 16 V.S.A. § 165a(a)(1)(B) (foreign languages, U.S. history and

1 government, world history, and geography), shall be administered beginning in
2 the 2018–2019 academic year; provided, however, that:

3 (1) the State Board of Education may choose to administer examinations
4 in fewer than all of the subject areas in this subsection in the 2018–2019
5 academic year and add additional subject areas in each year thereafter; and

6 (2) examinations in all subject areas shall be administered beginning not
7 later than the 2021–2022 academic year.

8 Sec. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

9 This act shall take effect on July 1, 2015, and shall be implemented
10 pursuant to Sec. 3 of this act.