

SB253 ENGROSSED



1 SB253

2 5N1V663-2

3 By Senators Chesteen, Carnley, Elliott, Allen, Kitchens,

4 Butler, Barfoot, Jones, Shelnut, Figures, Smitherman,

5 Sessions, Williams, Kelley, Singleton, Livingston, Reed,

6 Hovey, Roberts, Weaver, Waggoner, Coleman-Madison

7 RFD: Education Policy

8 First Read: 21-Mar-24



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A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To establish the Alabama Workforce Pathways Act; to provide different pathways for earning a high school diploma based on future career paths; to require the State Board of Education and the State Department of Education to develop a curriculum for earning a Workforce Pathways diploma; to provide, subject to funding, for the refurbishing and construction of new career and technical education centers or K-12 students; and to also provide, subject to funding, for the Alabama Short-Term Credential Program to provide additional scholarships for training through the Alabama Community College System.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. (a) This act shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Workforce Pathways Act.

(b) The purpose of this act is to provide enhanced academic and skilled trades opportunities for Alabama students, and to facilitate the development of a career pathways diploma at the K-12 level that would enhance career and technical education opportunities for high school students who plan to enter the workforce immediately after graduation.



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29 (c) The Legislature finds and declares that high school
30 students need more than one pathway to earn a high school
31 diploma in this state.

32 Section 2. (a) The State Board of Education shall
33 establish a new Workforce Pathways diploma pathway at the K-12
34 level.

35 (b) Following the establishment of the Workforce
36 Pathways diploma, the State Department of Education shall
37 develop the curriculum for this program within 120 days after
38 its approval by the State Board of Education.

39 (c) All K-12 students in this state shall earn the same
40 high school diploma, regardless of which diploma pathway they
41 follow; however, students enrolled in the Workforce Pathways
42 diploma pathway shall only be required to complete two math
43 credits and two science credits to earn their high school
44 diploma instead of the four math and four science credits
45 required of other students.

46 (d) In lieu of the math and science credits, students
47 enrolled in the Workforce Pathways diploma pathway may earn
48 credits that apply toward graduation by completing career and
49 technical education courses, which help prepare those students
50 to go directly into employment in their chosen field following
51 high school graduation.

52 (e) The State Department of Education shall work with
53 local boards of education throughout the state to implement
54 the Workforce Pathways diploma pathway at the local level.

55 (f) Students who earn a diploma through the Workforce
56 Pathway shall be eligible for admission to any postsecondary



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57 institution or public university in the state; provided,
58 however, each institution and university shall maintain the
59 ability to set its own admission requirements.

60 (g) Unless and until an alternative assessment is
61 developed for students in the Workforce Pathways diploma
62 pathway, their academic achievement may not be considered in
63 assigning an academic achievement grade to a school or school
64 system.

65 Section 3. The State Board of Education may seek
66 additional funding from the Legislature to construct,
67 retrofit, or upgrade career and technical education centers
68 throughout the state so that a career and technical education
69 center is located within a reasonable distance from every high
70 school in the state. While school systems with a larger
71 population of students may need their own career and technical
72 education center, school systems with smaller populations of
73 students may share career and technical education centers.

74 Section 4. The Legislature may provide additional
75 funding for the Alabama Short-Term Credential Program that
76 provides scholarships to facilitate the participation of
77 individuals in for credit and non-credit courses provided
78 through the Alabama Community College System offering training
79 for in-demand careers in the region where the course is
80 taught.

81 Section 5. This act shall become effective October 1,
82 2024.

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85 Senate

86 Read for the first time and referred21-Mar-24
87 to the Senate committee on Education
88 Policy
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90 Read for the second time and placed03-Apr-24
91 on the calendar:
92 1 amendment
93
94 Read for the third time and passed09-Apr-24
95 as amended
96 Yeas 34
97 Nays 0
98 Abstains 0
99

100
101 Patrick Harris,
102 Secretary.
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