

HOUSE BILL 387

By Powers

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, relative to creating an educational credential signifying completion of high school and to enact the Tennessee Alternative Diploma Act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 4-3-1422, is amended by deleting the section in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

4-3-1422.

(a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the "Tennessee alternative diploma act".

(b)

(1) The department of labor and workforce development and the state board of education shall design, develop and implement a test aligned with the common core standards and accompanying education reforms that shall, upon its successful passage, result in the award of a credential for individuals who did not graduate from high school. The credential shall be known as the Tennessee alternative diploma (TAD). Receipt of the TAD shall signify the completion of high school or its equivalent.

(2) The department of education, the Tennessee higher education commission, the board of regents and its institutions, particularly the community colleges and Tennessee technology centers, and the University of Tennessee and its institutions, as requested by the department of labor and workforce development and the state board of education, shall assist in the design, development and implementation of the test leading to the award of the TAD.

(3) The department of labor and workforce development and the state board of education shall consult with the department of economic and community development in the design and development of the test leading to the award of the TAD to ensure that the test addresses workforce skills needed to obtain employment in the state and its communities.

(c) The test shall be designed and developed so that receipt of the TAD shall be equivalent to receipt of the GED and that the TAD will be accepted and used in this state for all purposes for which the GED is accepted and used.

(d)

(1) The department of labor and workforce development may build upon the work required of it by Chapter 787 of the Public Acts of 2012 in designing, developing and implementing the TAD test. By February 1, 2013, the department of labor and workforce development shall make the report required by Chapter 787 of the Public Acts of 2012.

(2) The department of labor and workforce development and the state board of education shall report their progress in designing, developing and implementing the TAD test to the education committees of the senate and the house of representatives by February 1, 2014.

(3) The test shall be finalized by January 1, 2015, so that individuals shall be able to take the test on and after January 1, 2015, and upon passage of the test receive the TAD.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.