

HOUSE BILL 436

By Byrd

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1; Title 49, Chapter 2 and Title 49, Chapter 6, Part 60, relative to graduation rates.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-6-6001, is amended by adding the following language as a new subsection:

(1) The department of education shall require a public high school's graduation rate to be calculated as the number of students in an adjusted cohort who graduate in four (4) years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who form the adjusted cohort in that graduating class. The graduation rate calculated for a graduating class under this section shall be the only graduation rate calculated for public high schools and all reporting requirements.

(2) A student who is retained in a grade or leaves school without transferring into another school may not be counted as having transferred out for the purpose of calculating the graduation rate and shall remain in the adjusted cohort. To remove a student from the cohort, a school or LEA shall confirm in writing that the student transferred out, emigrated to another country, or is deceased. To confirm that a student transferred out, the school or LEA shall have official written documentation that the student enrolled in another school or in an educational program that culminates in the award of a regular high school diploma or a GED<sup>®</sup> or HiSET<sup>®</sup> diploma.

(3) As used in this subsection:

(A) "Cohort" means the students who enter a high school as a class in the ninth grade at the start of a school year, or in the earliest high

school grade if the high school does not have the ninth grade. Students who drop out of school after reaching eighteen (18) years of age shall not be included in the cohort for the purpose of calculating a graduation rate;

(B) "Adjusted cohort" means a cohort, plus any students who transfer into the cohort in grades nine through twelve (9-12) minus any students removed from the cohort; and

(C) "Students who transfer into a cohort" means the students who enroll after the beginning of the cohort's first year in high school; provided, that to be counted as transferring into the cohort a student shall have been enrolled in the high school for at least three hundred sixty (360) days during the period from the beginning of the cohort until the normal time for the cohort's graduation.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015, the public welfare requiring it.