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SYNOPSIS:

This bill would establish the Alabama Workforce Pathways Act.

This bill would provide different pathways towards earning a high school diploma based on the future workforce or continuing education plans of the student.

This bill would also provide, subject to funding, for the upgrade or additional construction of career and technical education centers throughout the state.

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 pathways 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



29 Short-Term Credential Program to provide additional
30 scholarships for training through the Alabama Community
31 College System.

32 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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

35 (b) The Legislature finds and declares that high school
36 students need more than one pathway to earn a high school
37 diploma in this state.

38 (c) The purpose of this act is to provide enhanced
39 postsecondary and career opportunities for all Alabama
40 students and to ensure that the state's graduation
41 requirements provide consistent, rigorous expectations that
42 can be met through multiple pathways to earn a high school
43 diploma.

44 (d) It is the intent of the Legislature that all
45 students, regardless of graduation pathway, shall participate
46 in the state's assessment system taking the same math,
47 science, and reading assessments, shall be included in all
48 school accountability calculations, and shall be prepared for
49 success in all postsecondary education options by graduation.

50 Section 2. (a) (1) The State Superintendent of Education
51 shall convene stakeholders to conduct a comprehensive review
52 of the state's graduation requirements and existing
53 flexibilities to understand the strengths and challenges of
54 the current requirements.

55 (2) These stakeholders shall include, but not be
56 limited to, representatives of local K-12 systems,



57 postsecondary institutions, education advocacy organizations,
58 workforce development agencies, representatives of business
59 and industry, and students and families. The State
60 Superintendent of Education is encouraged to work with
61 existing cross-agency councils, as appropriate.

62 (b) Before November 1, 2024, the State Superintendent
63 of Education shall propose a comprehensive set of graduation
64 requirements that includes multiple pathways to earn a high
65 school diploma. These requirements shall include all of the
66 following:

67 (1) A listing of required credits, courses,
68 competencies, and experiences required for all students,
69 regardless of graduation pathway.

70 (2) A listing of required credits, courses,
71 competencies, and experiences necessary for each identified
72 graduation pathway.

73 (3) A listing of approved course sequences and
74 substitutions that may be used to demonstrate competencies and
75 meet graduation requirements.

76 (4) Clear processes for students to transition from one
77 graduation pathway to another.

78 (5) Identification of any changes in state law that
79 would be needed to implement these requirements.

80 (c) The State Department of Education shall annually
81 collect information on which pathway each student uses to earn
82 a high school diploma. The department shall annually publish a
83 report that analyzes completion of each diploma pathway that
84 is disaggregated by student demographics, academic



85 achievement, school district, geographic region, and post-high
86 school outcomes including, but not limited to, enrollment in
87 and completion of postsecondary education, employment, wages,
88 and other workforce information.

89 (d) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules to
90 implement this act.

91 Section 3. (a) While school systems with a larger
92 population of students may need their own career and technical
93 education center, school systems with smaller populations of
94 students may share career and technical education centers.

95 (b) The State Superintendent of Education may seek
96 additional funding from the Legislature to construct,
97 retrofit, or upgrade career and technical education centers
98 throughout the state so that a career and technical education
99 center is located within a reasonable distance from every high
100 school in the state.

101 Section 4. The Legislature may provide additional
102 funding for the Alabama Short-Term Credential Program that
103 provides scholarships to facilitate the participation of
104 individuals in for credit and noncredit courses provided
105 through the Alabama Community College System offering training
106 for in-demand careers in the region where the course is
107 taught.

108 Section 5. To ensure these pathways lead to high-skill,
109 high-demand, and high-wage occupations, the State Department
110 of Education shall collaborate with the State Workforce Board
111 to conduct a recurring return on investment analysis.

112 Section 6. This act shall become effective immediately.