ASSEMBLY BILL No. 1922

Introduced by Assembly Member Luz Rivas

January 13, 2020

An act to amend Sections 51210, 51220, and 51225.3 of the Education Code, relating to pupil instruction.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

AB 1922, as introduced, Luz Rivas. Pupil instruction: science requirements: climate change.

(1) Existing law requires the adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, and the adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, to include certain areas of study, including, among others, English, mathematics, social sciences, science, and visual and performing arts, as specified.

This bill, with respect to both of the above-referenced adopted courses of study, would require the science area of study to include an emphasis on the causes and effects of climate change. The bill would require that appropriate coursework including this material be offered to pupils as soon as possible, commencing no later than the 2021–22 school year.

(2) Existing law requires a pupil to complete designated coursework while in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, in order to receive a diploma of graduation from high school. Existing law requires pupils, as part of this requirement, to complete 2 courses in science, including biological and physical sciences.

This bill, commencing with the class graduating in the 2025–26 school year, would add the requirement that at least one of those science courses include material on the causes and effects of climate change.
Because the bill would impose new duties on school districts, it would constitute a state-mandated local program.

(3) The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement. This bill would provide that, if the Commission on State Mandates determines that the bill contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement for those costs shall be made pursuant to the statutory provisions noted above.


The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 51210 of the Education Code is amended to read:

51210. (a) The adopted course of study for grades 1 to 6, inclusive, shall include instruction, beginning in grade 1 and continuing through grade 6, in the following areas of study:

(1) English, including knowledge of, and appreciation for literature and the language, as well as the skills of speaking, reading, listening, spelling, handwriting, and composition.

(2) Mathematics, including concepts, operational skills, and problem solving.

(3) Social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Instruction shall provide a foundation for understanding the history, resources, development, and government of California and the United States of America; the development of the American economic system, including the role of the entrepreneur and labor; the relations of persons to their human and natural environment; eastern and western cultures and civilizations; contemporary issues; and the wise use of natural resources.

(4) Science, including the biological and physical aspects, with emphasis on the processes of experimental inquiry and inquiry, on the place of humans in ecological systems, systems, and the causes and effects of climate change. Appropriate coursework including material on the causes and effects of climate change
shall be offered to pupils as soon as possible, commencing no later
than the 2021–22 school year.

(5) Visual and performing arts, including instruction in the
subjects of dance, music, theatre, and visual arts, aimed at the
development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative
expression.

(6) Health, including instruction in the principles and practices
of individual, family, and community health.

(7) Physical education, with emphasis upon the physical
activities for the pupils that may be conducive to health and vigor
of body and mind, for a total period of time of not less than 200
minutes each 10 schooldays, exclusive of recesses and the lunch
period.

(8) Other studies that may be prescribed by the governing board.

(b) (1) A complaint that a school district or county
superintendent of schools has not complied with the instructional
minute requirements of paragraph (7) of subdivision (a) may be
filed with a school district or county superintendent of schools
pursuant to the Uniform Complaint Procedures set forth in Chapter
5.1 (commencing with Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of
the California Code of Regulations.

(2) A complainant not satisfied with the decision of a school
district or county superintendent of schools may appeal the decision
to the department pursuant to Chapter 5.1 (commencing with
Section 4600) of Division 1 of Title 5 of the California Code of
Regulations and shall receive a written appeal decision within 60
days of the department’s receipt of the appeal.

(3) If a school district or county superintendent of schools finds
merit in a complaint, or the Superintendent finds merit in an appeal,
the school district or county superintendent of schools shall provide
a remedy to all affected pupils, parents, and guardians.

(c) The Legislature finds and declares that neither the original
provisions of this section, nor any subsequent amendments to it,
were intended to create a private right of action. However, nothing
in this subdivision shall restrict or expand the existing right of any
party to seek relief from noncompliance with this section pursuant
to a writ of mandate.

SEC. 2. Section 51220 of the Education Code is amended to
read:
The adopted course of study for grades 7 to 12, inclusive, shall offer courses in the following areas of study:

(a) English, including knowledge of and appreciation for literature, language, and composition, and the skills of reading, listening, and speaking.

(b) (1) Social sciences, drawing upon the disciplines of anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, psychology, and sociology, designed to fit the maturity of the pupils. Instruction shall provide a foundation for understanding the history, resources, development, and government of California and the United States of America; instruction in our American legal system, the operation of the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems, and the rights and duties of citizens under the criminal and civil law and the State and Federal Constitutions; the development of the American economic system, including the role of the entrepreneur and labor; the relations of persons to their human and natural environment; eastern and western cultures and civilizations; human rights issues, with particular attention to the study of the inhumanity of genocide, slavery, and the Holocaust, and contemporary issues.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, genocide may include the Armenian Genocide. The “Armenian Genocide” means the torture, starvation, and murder of 1,500,000 Armenians, which included death marches into the Syrian desert, by the rulers of the Ottoman Turkish Empire and the exile of more than 500,000 innocent people during the period from 1915 to 1923, inclusive.

(c) World language or languages, beginning not later than grade 7, designed to develop a facility for understanding, speaking, reading, and writing the particular language.

(d) Physical education, with emphasis given to physical activities that are conducive to health and to vigor of body and mind, as required by Section 51222.

(e) Science, including the physical and biological aspects, with emphasis on basic concepts, theories, and processes of scientific investigation and investigation, on the place of humans in ecological systems, on the causes and effects of climate change, and with appropriate applications of the interrelation and interdependence of the sciences. Appropriate coursework including material on the causes and effects of climate change shall be
offered to pupils as soon as possible, commencing no later than the 2021–22 school year.

(f) Mathematics, including instruction designed to develop mathematical understandings, operational skills, and insight into problem-solving procedures.

(g) Visual and performing arts, including dance, music, theater, and visual arts, with emphasis upon development of aesthetic appreciation and the skills of creative expression.

(h) Applied arts, including instruction in the areas of consumer education, family and consumer sciences education, industrial arts, general business education, or general agriculture.

(i) Career technical education designed and conducted for the purpose of preparing youth for gainful employment in the occupations and in the numbers that are appropriate to the personnel needs of the state and the community served and relevant to the career desires and needs of the pupils.

(j) Automobile driver education, designed to develop a knowledge of the Vehicle Code and other laws of this state relating to the operation of motor vehicles, a proper acceptance of personal responsibility in traffic, a true appreciation of the causes, seriousness, and consequences of traffic accidents, and to develop the knowledge and attitudes necessary for the safe operation of motor vehicles. A course in automobile driver education shall include education in the safe operation of motorcycles.

(k) Other studies as may be prescribed by the governing board.

SEC. 3. Section 51225.3 of the Education Code, as amended by Section 17 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2018, is amended to read:

51225.3. (a) A pupil shall complete all of the following while in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, in order to receive a diploma of graduation from high school:

(1) At least the following numbers of courses in the subjects specified, each course having a duration of one year, unless otherwise specified:

(A) Three courses in English.

(B) Two courses in mathematics. If the governing board of a school district requires more than two courses in mathematics for graduation, the governing board of the school district may award a pupil up to one mathematics course credit pursuant to Section 51225.35.
(C) Two courses in science, including biological and physical sciences. Commencing with the class graduating in the 2025–26 school year, at least one of these courses shall include material on the causes and effects of climate change.

(D) Three courses in social studies, including United States history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a one-semester course in American government and civics; and a one-semester course in economics.

(E) One course in visual or performing arts, world language, or, commencing with the 2012–13 school year, career technical education.

   (i) For purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in this subparagraph, a course in American Sign Language shall be deemed a course in world language.

   (ii) For purposes of this subparagraph, “a course in career technical education” means a course in a district-operated career technical education program that is aligned to the career technical model curriculum standards and framework adopted by the state board, including courses through a regional occupational center or program operated by a county superintendent of schools or pursuant to a joint powers agreement.

   (iii) This subparagraph does not require a school or school district that currently does not offer career technical education courses to start new career technical education programs for purposes of this section.

   (iv) If a school district or county office of education elects to allow a career technical education course to satisfy the requirement imposed by this subparagraph, the governing board of the school district or county office of education, before offering that alternative to pupils, shall notify parents, teachers, pupils, and the public at a regularly scheduled meeting of the governing board of all of the following:

      (I) The intent to offer career technical education courses to fulfill the graduation requirement specified in this subparagraph.

      (II) The impact that offering career technical education courses, pursuant to this subparagraph, will have on the availability of courses that meet the eligibility requirements for admission to the California State University and the University of California, and whether the career technical education courses to be offered pursuant to this subparagraph are approved to satisfy those
eligibility requirements. If a school district elects to allow a career
technical education course to satisfy the requirement imposed by
this subparagraph, the school district shall comply with subdivision
(m) (l) of Section 48980.

(III) The distinction, if any, between the high school graduation
requirements of the school district or county office of education,
and the eligibility requirements for admission to the California
State University and the University of California.

(F) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has been
exempted pursuant to the provisions of this code.

(2) Other coursework requirements adopted by the governing
board of the school district.

(b) The governing board, with the active involvement of parents,
administrators, teachers, and pupils, shall adopt alternative means
for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study that may
include practical demonstration of skills and competencies,
supervised work experience or other outside school experience,
career technical education classes offered in high schools, courses
offered by regional occupational centers or programs,
interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a
postsecondary educational institution. Requirements for graduation
and specified alternative modes for completing the prescribed
course of study shall be made available to pupils, parents, and the
public.

(c) On or before July 1, 2017, the department shall submit a
comprehensive report to the appropriate policy committees of the
Legislature on the addition of career technical education courses
to satisfy the requirement specified in subparagraph (E) of
paragraph (1) of subdivision (a), including, but not limited to, the
following information:

(1) A comparison of the pupil enrollment in career technical
education courses, world language courses, and visual and
performing arts courses for the 2005–06 to 2011–12 school years,
inclusive, to the pupil enrollment in career technical education
courses, world language courses, and visual and performing arts
courses for the 2012–13 to 2016–17 school years, inclusive.

(2) The reasons, reported by school districts, that pupils give
for choosing to enroll in a career technical education course to
satisfy the requirement specified in subparagraph (E) of paragraph
(1) of subdivision (a).
(3) The type and number of career technical education courses that were conducted for the 2005–06 to 2011–12 school years, inclusive, compared to the type and number of career technical education courses that were conducted for the 2012–13 to 2016–17 school years, inclusive.

(4) The number of career technical education courses that satisfied the subject matter requirements for admission to the University of California or the California State University.

(5) The extent to which the career technical education courses chosen by pupils are aligned with the California Career Technical Education Model Curriculum Standards, and prepare pupils for employment, advanced training, and postsecondary education.

(6) The number of career technical education courses that also satisfy the visual and performing arts requirement, and the number of career technical education courses that also satisfy the world language requirement.

(7) Annual pupil dropout and graduation rates for the 2011–12 to 2014–15 school years, inclusive.

(d) For purposes of completing the report described in subdivision (c), the Superintendent may use existing state resources and federal funds. If state or federal funds are not available or sufficient, the Superintendent may apply for and accept grants, and receive donations and other financial support from public or private sources for purposes of this section.

(e) For purposes of completing the report described in subdivision (c), the Superintendent may accept support, including, but not limited to, financial and technical support, from high school reform advocates, teachers, chamber organizations, industry representatives, research centers, parents, and pupils.

(f) This section shall become inoperative on the earlier of the following two dates:

(1) On July 1, immediately following the first fiscal year after the enactment of the act that adds this paragraph in which the number of career technical education courses that, as determined by the department, satisfy the world language requirement for admission to the California State University and the University of California is at least twice the number of career technical education courses that meet these admission requirements as of January 1, 2012. This section shall be repealed on the following January 1, unless a later enacted statute, that becomes operative on or before
that date, deletes or extends the dates on which it becomes
inoperative and is repealed. It is the intent of the Legislature that
new career technical education courses that satisfy the world
language requirement for admission to the California State
University and the University of California focus on world
languages aligned with career preparation, emphasizing real-world
application and technical content in related career and technical
education courses.

(2) On July 1, 2022, and, as of January 1, 2023, is repealed,
unless a later enacted statute, that becomes operative on or before
January 1, 2023, deletes or extends the dates on which it becomes
inoperative and is repealed.

SEC. 4. Section 51225.3 of the Education Code, as amended
by Section 18 of Chapter 865 of the Statutes of 2018, is amended
to read:

51225.3. (a) A pupil shall complete all of the following while
in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, in order to receive a diploma of
graduation from high school:
(1) At least the following numbers of courses in the subjects
specified, each course having a duration of one year, unless
otherwise specified:
(A) Three courses in English.
(B) Two courses in mathematics. If the governing board of a
school district requires more than two courses in mathematics for
graduation, the governing board of the school district may award
a pupil up to one mathematics course credit pursuant to Section
51225.35.
(C) Two courses in science, including biological and physical
sciences. Commencing with the class graduating in the 2025–26
school year, at least one of these courses shall include material
on the causes and effects of climate change.
(D) Three courses in social studies, including United States
history and geography; world history, culture, and geography; a
one-semester course in American government and civics; and a
one-semester course in economics.
(E) One course in visual or performing arts or world language.
For purposes of satisfying the requirement specified in this
subparagraph, a course in American Sign Language shall be
deemed a course in world language.
(F) Two courses in physical education, unless the pupil has been exempted pursuant to the provisions of this code.

(2) Other coursework requirements adopted by the governing board of the school district.

(b) The governing board, with the active involvement of parents, administrators, teachers, and pupils, shall adopt alternative means for pupils to complete the prescribed course of study that may include practical demonstration of skills and competencies, supervised work experience or other outside school experience, career technical education classes offered in high schools, courses offered by regional occupational centers or programs, interdisciplinary study, independent study, and credit earned at a postsecondary educational institution. Requirements for graduation and specified alternative modes for completing the prescribed course of study shall be made available to pupils, parents, and the public.

(c) If a pupil completed a career technical education course that met the requirements of subparagraph (E) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 51225.3, as amended by the act adding this section, before the inoperative date of that section, that course shall be deemed to fulfill the requirements of subparagraph (E) of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of this section.

(d) This section shall become operative upon the date that Section 51225.3, as amended by the act adding this section, becomes inoperative.

SEC. 5. If the Commission on State Mandates determines that this act contains costs mandated by the state, reimbursement to local agencies and school districts for those costs shall be made pursuant to Part 7 (commencing with Section 17500) of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Government Code.