



AN ACT PROVIDING STUDENTS ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA; REQUIRING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO CREATE A PROCESS FOR STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE PROFICIENCY OF HIGH SCHOOL CONTENT STANDARDS THROUGH ALTERNATIVE MEANS; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

**Section 1. State high school diploma -- duties of superintendent of public instruction --**

**rulemaking.** (1) The superintendent of public instruction shall develop a process through which a resident of the state who has exhausted, in the determination of the superintendent, the possibility of earning a diploma from a high school accredited by the board of public education can pursue a Montana proficiency-based diploma by demonstrating:

(a) proficiency of the content standards adopted by the board of public education through alternative means; and

(b) perseverance and dedication in accomplishing a rigorous, long-term goal requiring maturity and the application of knowledge to real-world situations.

(2) When an individual demonstrates proficiency, perseverance, and dedication as determined by the superintendent of public instruction under subsection (1), the superintendent may issue to the individual a Montana proficiency-based diploma.

(3) An individual enrolled in a home school or nonpublic school is not eligible for a Montana proficiency-based diploma under this section.

(4) The superintendent of public instruction shall by rule prescribe the eligibility and qualifications for pursuing a Montana proficiency-based diploma under this section.

**Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an integral part of Title 20, chapter 3, part 1, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 3, part 1, apply to [section 1].

**Section 3. Effective date.** [This act] is effective on passage and approval.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within bill,  
HB 556, originated in the House.

---

Chief Clerk of the House

---

Speaker of the House

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

---

President of the Senate

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day  
of \_\_\_\_\_, 2021.

HOUSE BILL NO. 556

INTRODUCED BY K. WALSH, D. BEDEY, T. WELCH, J. WELBORN

AN ACT PROVIDING STUDENTS ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF EARNING A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA;  
REQUIRING THE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION TO CREATE A PROCESS FOR  
STUDENTS TO DEMONSTRATE PROFICIENCY OF HIGH SCHOOL CONTENT STANDARDS THROUGH  
ALTERNATIVE MEANS; PROVIDING RULEMAKING AUTHORITY; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE  
EFFECTIVE DATE.