

SENATE BILL NO. 18

INTRODUCED BY D. SALOMON

BY REQUEST OF THE STATE-TRIBAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING CERTAIN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO MEET THE STATE MINIMUM GRADUATION CREDIT REQUIREMENT TO RECEIVE A DIPLOMA FROM A DISTRICT THAT HAS A HIGHER CREDIT REQUIREMENT; AND PROVIDING AN IMMEDIATE EFFECTIVE DATE."

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

**NEW SECTION. Section 1. Graduation requirements for youth who experience a disruption in education -- legislative intent.** (1) The legislature finds and declares pursuant to Article X, section 1, of the Montana constitution that an appropriate means of fulfilling the people's goal of developing the full educational potential of each person is to allow a pupil who experiences an educational disruption to obtain a diploma if the pupil meets the state's minimum high school credit requirement. The legislature believes educational disruptions can interfere with pupil success and intends the policy established in this section to provide additional options for a pupil to achieve the individual's maximum postsecondary potential.

(2) If an enrolled high school pupil who has experienced an educational disruption meets the minimum high school credit requirement for graduation as established by administrative rules of the board of public education but will not meet a higher credit requirement established by the trustees of the district where the student is enrolled, the trustees of the district shall award the student a diploma. The trustees may distinguish the diploma in a reasonable manner from other diplomas issued by the trustees.

(3) Pursuant to 20-5-101(3), if a pupil who receives a diploma pursuant to this section is not yet 19 years of age, the trustees may admit the individual to provide any reasonable curriculum designed to advance postsecondary success, including courses for postsecondary credit and career training.

(4) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Board of public education" has the same meaning as provided in 20-1-101.

1 (b) "Educational disruption" means a disruption experienced during grades nine through twelve  
2 caused by homelessness, involvement in the child welfare system or juvenile justice system, a medical or  
3 mental health crisis, or another event considered a qualifying educational disruption by the trustees of the  
4 district.

5 (c) "Homelessness" has the same meaning as provided for the term "homeless children and youths"  
6 in 42 U.S.C. 11434a(2).

7 (d) "Pupil" has the same meaning as provided in 20-1-101.

8  
9 **NEW SECTION. Section 2. Codification instruction.** [Section 1] is intended to be codified as an  
10 integral part of Title 20, chapter 7, part 13, and the provisions of Title 20, chapter 7, part 13, apply to [section 1].

11

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

13

14

- END -