

CHAPTER 97**(HB 113)**

AN ACT relating to the awarding of high school diplomas.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 158.140 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) When a pupil in any public elementary school or any approved private or parochial school completes the prescribed elementary program of studies, he is entitled to a certificate of completion signed by the teacher or teachers under whom the program was completed. The certificate shall entitle the pupil to admission into any public high school. Any promotions or credits earned in attendance in any approved public school are valid in any other public school to which a pupil may go, but the superintendent or principal of a school, as the case may be, may assign the pupil to the class or grade to which the pupil is best suited. In case a pupil transfers from the school of one (1) district to the school of another district, an assignment to a lower grade or course shall not be made until the pupil has demonstrated that he is not suited for the work in the grade or course to which he has been promoted.
- (2) Upon successful completion of all state and local board requirements, the student shall receive a diploma indicating graduation from high school.
- (3) A local school board may award a diploma indicating graduation from high school to any student posthumously with the high school class the student was expected to graduate.
- (4) A local board of education shall award a high school diploma to an honorably discharged veteran who was enrolled in, but did not complete, high school prior to being inducted into the United States Armed Forces during World War II, *as defined in KRS 40.010, or the Korean conflict*, as defined in KRS 40.010. Upon recommendation of the commissioner, the Kentucky Board of Education in consultation with the Kentucky Department of Veterans' Affairs shall promulgate administrative regulations to establish the guidelines for awarding these diplomas.
- (5) The Department of Education shall establish the requirements for a vocational certificate of completion. A student who has returned to school after dropping out shall receive counseling concerning the vocational program. A student who has completed the requirements established for a vocational program shall receive a vocational certificate of completion specifying the areas of competence.

Section 2. KRS 156.160 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) With the advice of the Local Superintendents Advisory Council, the Kentucky Board of Education shall promulgate administrative regulations establishing standards which school districts shall meet in student, program, service, and operational performance. These regulations shall comply with the expected outcomes for students and schools set forth in KRS 158.6451. Administrative regulations shall be promulgated for the following:
 - (a) Courses of study for the different grades and kinds of common schools identifying the common curriculum content directly tied to the goals, outcomes, and assessment strategies developed under KRS 158.645, 158.6451, and 158.6453 and distributed to local school districts and schools. *The administrative regulations shall provide that*~~They shall include the following~~:

1. *If a school offers* ~~The courses of study for students shall include~~ American sign language, *the course* ~~which~~ shall be accepted as meeting the foreign language requirements in common schools notwithstanding other provisions of law; *and*
 2. *If a school offers the Reserve Officers Training Corps program, the course shall be accepted as meeting the physical education requirement for high school graduation notwithstanding other provisions of law;*
- (b) The acquisition and use of educational equipment for the schools as recommended by the Council for Education Technology;
 - (c) The minimum requirements for high school graduation in light of the expected outcomes for students and schools set forth in KRS 158.6451. Student scores from any assessment administered under KRS 158.6453 that are determined by the National Technical Advisory Panel to be valid and reliable at the individual level shall be included on the student transcript. The National Technical Advisory Panel shall submit its determination to the commissioner of education and the Legislative Research Commission;
 - (d) Taking and keeping a school census, and the forms, blanks, and software to be used in taking and keeping the census and in compiling the required reports. The board shall create a statewide student identification numbering system based on students' Social Security numbers. The system shall provide a student identification number similar to, but distinct from, the Social Security number, for each student who does not have a Social Security number or whose parents or guardians choose not to disclose the Social Security number for the student;
 - (e) Sanitary and protective construction of public school buildings, toilets, physical equipment of school grounds, school buildings, and classrooms. With respect to physical standards of sanitary and protective construction for school buildings, the Kentucky Board of Education shall adopt the Uniform State Building Code;
 - (f) Medical inspection, physical and health education and recreation, and other regulations necessary or advisable for the protection of the physical welfare and safety of the public school children. The administrative regulations shall set requirements for student health standards to be met by all students in grades four (4), eight (8), and twelve (12) pursuant to the outcomes described in KRS 158.6451. The administrative regulations shall permit a student who received a physical examination no more than six (6) months prior to his initial admission to Head Start to substitute that physical examination for the physical examination required by the Kentucky Board of Education of all students upon initial admission to the public schools, if the physical examination given in the Head Start program meets all the requirements of the physical examinations prescribed by the Kentucky Board of Education;
 - (g) A vision examination by an optometrist or ophthalmologist that shall be required by the Kentucky Board of Education. The administrative regulations shall require evidence that a vision examination that meets the criteria prescribed by the Kentucky Board of Education has been performed. This evidence shall be submitted to the school no later than January 1 of the first year that a three (3), four (4), five (5), or six (6) year-old child is enrolled in a public school, public preschool, or Head Start program;
 - (h) The transportation of children to and from school;

- (i) The fixing of holidays on which schools may be closed and special days to be observed, and the pay of teachers during absence because of sickness or quarantine or when the schools are closed because of quarantine;
 - (j) The preparation of budgets and salary schedules for the several school districts under the management and control of the Kentucky Board of Education;
 - (k) A uniform series of forms and blanks, educational and financial, including forms of contracts, for use in the several school districts; and
 - (l) The disposal of real and personal property owned by local boards of education.
- (2) (a) At the request of a local board of education or a school council, a local school district superintendent shall request that the Kentucky Board of Education waive any administrative regulation promulgated by that board. Beginning in the 1996-97 school year, a request for waiver of any administrative regulation shall be submitted to the Kentucky Board of Education in writing with appropriate justification for the waiver. The Kentucky Board of Education may approve the request when the school district or school has demonstrated circumstances that may include but are not limited to the following:
- 1. An alternative approach will achieve the same result required by the administrative regulation;
 - 2. Implementation of the administrative regulation will cause a hardship on the school district or school or jeopardize the continuation or development of programs; or
 - 3. There is a finding of good cause for the waiver.
- (b) The following shall not be subject to waiver:
- 1. Administrative regulations relating to health and safety;
 - 2. Administrative regulations relating to civil rights;
 - 3. Administrative regulations required by federal law; and
 - 4. Administrative regulations promulgated in accordance with KRS 158.6451, 158.6453, 158.6455, 158.685, and this section, relating to measurement of performance outcomes and determination of successful districts or schools, except upon issues relating to the grade configuration of schools.
- (c) Any waiver granted under this subsection shall be subject to revocation upon a determination by the Kentucky Board of Education that the school district or school holding the waiver has subsequently failed to meet the intent of the waiver.
- (3) Any private, parochial, or church school may voluntarily comply with curriculum, certification, and textbook standards established by the Kentucky Board of Education and be certified upon application to the board by such schools.

Approved April 7, 2004