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AB-24 Instructional programs: State Seal of Civic Engagement. (2017-2018)

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Assembly Bill No. 24

CHAPTER 604

An act to add Article 7 (commencing with Section 51470) to Chapter 3 of Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, relating to instructional programs.

[Approved by Governor October 09, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State October 09, 2017.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 24, Eggman. Instructional programs: State Seal of Civic Engagement.

Existing law sets forth various requirements for the issuance of diplomas conferred upon a pupil as evidence of graduation from high school. Existing law establishes the Golden State Seal Merit Diploma for the purpose of recognizing pupils who have mastered the high school curriculum. Existing law also establishes the State Seal of Biliteracy, awarded by the Superintendent of Public Instruction in accordance with specified criteria, to recognize high school graduates who have attained a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing in one or more languages in addition to English.

This bill would require the Superintendent, on or before January 1, 2020, to recommend to the State Board of Education criteria for awarding a State Seal of Civic Engagement to pupils who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and have demonstrated an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. The bill would require the Superintendent to consider, among other criteria, the successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education, and voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities. The bill would require the state board, on or before January 31, 2021, to adopt, reject, or modify the criteria recommended by the Superintendent.

The bill would require the Superintendent to prepare and deliver to participating school districts the seal insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of a pupil awarded the State Seal of Civic Engagement. The bill would also require participating school districts to maintain records in order to identify pupils who have earned the State Seal of Civic Engagement and to affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of those pupils.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. Article 7 (commencing with Section 51470) is added to Chapter 3 of Part 28 of Division 4 of Title 2 of the Education Code, to read:

Article 7. State Seal of Civic Engagement

51470. It is the intent of the Legislature to establish a State Seal of Civic Engagement to encourage, and create pathways for, pupils in elementary and secondary schools to become civically engaged in democratic governmental institutions at the local, state, and national levels.

51471. (a) On or before January 1, 2020, the Superintendent shall recommend to the state board criteria for awarding a State Seal of Civic Engagement to pupils who have demonstrated excellence in civics education and participation and have demonstrated an understanding of the United States Constitution, the California Constitution, and the democratic system of government. In developing criteria for the State Seal of Civic Engagement, the Superintendent shall incorporate the Six Proven Practices for Effective Civic Learning, developed by the Education Commission of the States, and any and all other best practices for civic learning and engagement. In developing criteria for the State Seal of Civic Engagement, the Superintendent shall also consult with a diverse group of credentialed, current, classroom teachers who teach the subject of history-social science, including government, in secondary schools. The Superintendent shall also consider including criteria based on each of the following:

- (1) Successful completion of history, government, and civics courses, including courses that incorporate character education.
- (2) Voluntary participation in community service or extracurricular activities.
- (3) Any other related requirements as it deems appropriate.

(b) In developing criteria pursuant to subdivision (a), the Superintendent shall ensure, to the greatest extent feasible, that the criteria:

- (1) Provide all pupils with an opportunity to earn the State Seal of Civic Engagement.
- (2) Recognize pupil excellence or outstanding achievement.
- (3) Are not based primarily on pupil achievement that is already recognized through grades or other standard measures of pupil achievement.
- (4) To the extent possible, result in a seal that confers some benefit to pupils beyond secondary school.

(c) On or before January 31, 2021, the state board shall adopt, reject, or modify the criteria recommended by the Superintendent pursuant to subdivision (a).

(d) School district participation in this program is voluntary.

51472. The Superintendent shall do both of the following:

- (a) Prepare and deliver to participating school districts an appropriate insignia to be affixed to the diploma or transcript of the pupil indicating that the pupil has been awarded a State Seal of Civic Engagement by the Superintendent.
- (b) Provide other information he or she deems necessary for school districts to successfully participate in the program.

51473. A school district that participates in the program under this article shall do both of the following:

- (a) Maintain appropriate records in order to identify pupils who have earned a State Seal of Civic Engagement.
- (b) Affix the appropriate insignia to the diploma or transcript of each pupil who earns a State Seal of Civic Engagement.

51474. No fee shall be charged to a pupil to receive a State Seal of Civic Engagement.