

HB 624 -- EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES (Richey)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Emerging Issues

This bill establishes the "Show Me Success Diploma Program" as an alternative pathway to graduation for high school students. Students may earn the Show Me Success Diploma beginning at the end of a student's 10th grade year. By July 1, 2022, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall develop detailed requirements for students to become eligible for the Show Me Success Diploma.

Students who earn a Show Me Success Diploma may elect to remain in high school. Alternatively, a student having earned the diploma may instead enroll in a qualifying postsecondary educational institution. For each student enrolled in such an institution, an amount equal to 90% of the pupil's proportionate share of the state, local, and federal aid that the district or charter school receives for such pupil, shall be deposited into an account that lists the pupil as the beneficiary.

Currently, an adult high school includes on-site child care for the children of students, this bill removes the on-site requirement and specifies that an adult high school is considered a "secondary school system" in regards to providing child care. The bill also adds that a student connected online to a live class is considered in-person instruction for an adult high school student.

This bill establishes the "Competency-Based Education Task Force" to study and develop competency-based education programs in public schools. The Task Force members will be appointed before October 31, 2021: two members of the House of Representatives appointed by the Speaker, two members of the Senate appointed by the President Pro Tem, four members appointed by the Governor. The Commissioner or his or her designee shall also serve on the Task Force. The members of the Task Force will represent the geographic diversity of the state.

The requirements, duties and obligations of the Task Force are outlined in the bill. A report shall be presented to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro Tem of the Senate, the Joint Committee on Education, and the State Board of Education by the first of December annually.

This bill changes the Missouri Education Savings Program to the "Missouri Education Program" and changes the definition of an "eligible education institution" to an eligible education institution as defined in Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code.

This bill is similar to SB 34 (2021).