

State Board approves long-term graduation requirements proposal

The State Board of Education last month approved the recommendations of its Achievement and Graduation Requirements Committee for new high school graduation requirements for 2021 and beyond.

The proposed approach would require students to demonstrate competency in English, math, and technology knowledge and skills using various options, including traditional tests, classes, grades, experiences, existing high school programming and other demonstrations of learning.

Students also would have the opportunity to demonstrate competency in well-rounded content through similar test based and non-test based options or through a culminating student experience, which would allow a student to focus on particular interests and aspirations and make connections among ideas and concepts.

The plan also promotes student cultivation and demonstration of leadership and reasoning skills and social-emotional learning skills in ways established by local district policy.

As previously reported, the State Board recommended to the General Assembly that the flexible graduation requirements put in place for the class of 2018 be extended, but no legislative action has been taken.

Sen. Peggy Lehner (R-Kettering), who serves as an ex-officio member of the State Board, offered assurance that “it is the intention of the Senate” to pass legislation allowing for alternative pathways to graduation for the classes of 2019, 2020 and, possibly, 2021.

“We’ll probably be adding it on to a House bill that’s already passed,” she said, suggesting that H.B. 477, which calls for elimination of outdated education-related laws, may be the vehicle.

She said it’s unlikely that the Senate will consider the board’s long-term recommendations before next year.

“At this point, it is our intention to introduce the new recommendation next year in time for the budget,” Lehner said. “There’s still some details that need to be worked out on that.”

