AN ACT

RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS; CHANGING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS ENTERING NINTH GRADE IN THE 2025-2026 SCHOOL YEAR; PREPARING STUDENTS TO GRADUATE WITH A DIPLOMA OF EXCELLENCE; ALIGNING NEXT-STEP PLANS TO GRADUATE PROFILES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 22-13-1.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1986, Chapter 33, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

"22-13-1.1. GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS--NEXT-STEP PLANS.--

A. The purpose of the New Mexico diploma of excellence is to demonstrate that a student is ready for success in post-secondary education, gainful employment and citizenship and is equipped with the skills to be a lifelong learner. The purpose of the state's minimum graduation requirements is to establish rigorous expectations to support that success.

B. School districts and charter schools are encouraged to make available courses and programs of study that allow students to pursue a range of post-secondary opportunities and workforce opportunities and gain knowledge in entrepreneurship principles, as determined by the student's next-step plan and the school district's or charter school's graduate profile.

C. At the end of grades eight through eleven, each
student shall prepare an interim next-step plan that sets forth the coursework for the grades remaining until high school graduation. Each year's plan shall be aligned to the graduate profile of the student's school district or charter school, shall be completed on a department-approved template, shall explain any differences from previous interim next-step plans, shall be filed with the principal of the student's high school and shall be signed by the student, the student's parent and the student's guidance counselor or other school official charged with coursework planning for the student.

D. Each student must complete a final next-step plan during the senior year and prior to graduation. The plan shall be aligned to the graduate profile of the student's school district or charter school, shall be completed on a department-approved template, shall be filed with the principal of the student's high school and shall be signed by the student, the student's parent and the student's guidance counselor or other school official charged with coursework planning for the student.

E. An individualized education plan that meets the requirements of Subsections C and D of this section and that meets all applicable transition and procedural requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act for a student with a disability shall satisfy the next-step plan requirements of this section for that student.
F. A local school board or governing body of a charter school shall ensure that each high school student develops a next-step plan based on reports of college and workplace readiness assessments, as available, and other factors and is reasonably informed about:

(1) curricular and course options, including honors or advanced placement courses, international baccalaureate courses, dual-credit courses, distance learning courses, career clusters and career pathways, pre-apprenticeship programs or remediation programs that the college and workplace readiness assessments indicate to be appropriate;

(2) opportunities available that lead to different post-high-school options; and

(3) alternative opportunities available if the student does not finish a planned curriculum.

G. The secretary shall:

(1) establish specific accountability standards for administrators, counselors, teachers and other appropriate school district or charter school employees to ensure that every student has the opportunity to develop a next-step plan;

(2) promulgate rules for accredited private schools in order to ensure substantial compliance with the provisions of this section;
(3) monitor compliance with the requirements
of this section; and

(4) compile such information as is necessary
to evaluate the success of next-step plans and report
annually, by December 15, to the legislative education study
committee and the governor.

H. Once a student has entered ninth grade, the
graduation requirements shall not be changed for that student
from the requirements specified in the law at the time the
student entered ninth grade.

I. For students entering the ninth grade beginning
in the 2009-2010 school year, at least one of the units
required for graduation shall be earned as an advanced
placement or honors course, a dual-credit course offered in
cooperation with an institution of higher education or a
distance learning course.

J. The department shall establish a procedure for
students to be awarded credit through completion of specified
career technical education for certain graduation
requirements, and districts may choose to allow students who
successfully complete an industry-recognized credential,
certificate or degree to receive additional weight in the
calculation of the student's grade point average.

K. Successful completion of the requirements of
the New Mexico diploma of excellence shall be required for
graduation for students entering the ninth grade beginning in
the 2009-2010 school year. Successful completion of a
minimum of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic
content and performance standards shall be required to earn a
New Mexico diploma of excellence. These units shall be as
follows:

(1) four units in English, with major
emphasis on grammar, nonfiction writing and literature;
provided that department-approved work-based training or
career and technical education courses that meet state
English academic content performance standards shall qualify
as one of the four required English units;

(2) four units in mathematics, of which one
shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of
algebra 2, unless the parent submitted written, signed
permission for the student to complete a lesser mathematics
unit; and provided that a financial literacy course or
department-approved work-based training or career and
technical education course that meets state mathematics
academic content and performance standards shall qualify as
one of the four required mathematics units;

(3) three units in science, two of which
shall have a laboratory component; provided that department-
approved work-based training or career and technical
education courses that meet state science academic content
and performance standards shall qualify as one of the three required science units;

(4) three and one-half units in social science, which shall include United States history and geography, world history and geography, government and economics and one-half unit of New Mexico history;

(5) one unit in physical education, as determined by each school district or charter school, which may include a physical education program that meets state content and performance standards or participation in marching band, junior reserve officers' training corps or interscholastic sports sanctioned by the New Mexico activities association or any other co-curricular physical activity;

(6) one unit in one of the following: a career cluster course, workplace readiness or a language other than English; and

(7) seven and one-half elective units that meet department content and performance standards. Career and technical education courses shall be offered as an elective. Student service learning shall be offered as an elective. Financial literacy shall be offered as an elective. Pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as electives. Media literacy may be offered as an elective.

L. For students entering the eighth grade in the...
2012-2013 school year, one-half unit in health education is required prior to graduation. Health education may be required in either middle school or high school, as determined by the school district or charter school. Health education courses shall include:

(1) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention training that meets department standards developed in consultation with the federal centers for disease control and prevention that are based on evidence-based methods that have proven to be effective; and (2) lifesaving skills training that follows nationally recognized guidelines for hands-on psychomotor skills cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Students shall be trained to recognize the signs of a heart attack, use an automated external defibrillator and perform the Heimlich maneuver for choking victims. The secretary shall promulgate rules to provide for the:

(a) use of the following instructors for the training provided pursuant to this paragraph: 1) school nurses, health teachers and athletic department personnel as instructors; and 2) any qualified persons volunteering to provide training at no cost to the school district or charter school that the school district or charter school determines to be eligible to offer instruction pursuant to this paragraph; and
(b) approval of training and instructional materials related to the training established pursuant to this paragraph in both English and Spanish.

M. For students entering the ninth grade in the 2017-2018 school year and subsequent school years:

   (1) one of the units in mathematics required by Paragraph (2) of Subsection K of this section may comprise a computer science course if the course is not used to satisfy any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph (3) of that subsection; and

   (2) one of the units in science required by Paragraph (3) of Subsection K of this section may comprise a computer science course if the course is not used to satisfy any part of the requirement set forth in Paragraph (2) of that subsection.

N. Final examinations shall be administered to all students in all classes offered for credit.

O. Beginning with students entering the ninth grade in the 2025-2026 school year, successful completion of a minimum of twenty-four units aligned to the state academic content and performance standards shall be required for graduation and the award of a diploma of excellence. These units shall be as follows:

   (1) four units in English, which shall include a three-unit sequence; provided that department-
approved work-based learning, career technical education or
English language development courses that meet state English
or English language development academic content and
performance standards may qualify as required English units;

(2) four units in mathematics, two of which
shall include a sequence of algebra 1 and geometry or another
integrated pathway of mathematics equivalent to algebra 1 and
geometry; provided that financial literacy courses or
derpartment-approved work-based learning or career technical
education courses that meet state mathematics academic
content and performance standards may qualify as required
mathematics units; and provided further that algebra 2 shall
be offered as a mathematics course;

(3) three units in science, two of which
shall have a laboratory component; provided that department-
approved work-based learning or career technical education
courses that meet state science academic content and
performance standards may qualify as required science units;

(4) four units in social science, which
shall include United States history and geography, which
course content contains New Mexico history; government and
economics and personal financial literacy, which course
content contains civics; and world history and geography;

(5) one unit in physical education, as
determined by the school district or charter school, which
may include a physical education program that meets state academic content and performance standards or participation in marching band, dance programs, junior reserve officers' training corps or interscholastic sports sanctioned by the New Mexico activities association or any other co-curricular physical activity;

(6) one-half unit in health education;
provided that this one-half unit may be earned in either middle or high school;

(7) five and one-half elective units that meet department academic content and performance standards and that shall include a two-unit pathway concentration of the student's choice in a language other than English, including American sign language; fine arts; health; military career preparation; a career technical education program; or community or service learning, a capstone course or work-based learning; provided that financial literacy, computer science, student service learning, career technical education courses and a sequence of languages other than English shall be offered as electives; and provided further that media literacy and pre-apprenticeship programs may be offered as electives; and

(8) two units set by each local school board or governing body of a charter school that meet department academic content and performance standards.
P. If a high school student who has taken one or both units provided in Paragraph (8) of Subsection O of this section moves from one school district or charter school to another, the receiving school district or charter school shall accept those earned units toward the student's graduation.

Q. For students entering the ninth grade in the 2025-2026 school year, one-half unit of health education is required prior to graduation. Health education courses shall include:

   (1) age-appropriate sexual abuse and assault awareness and prevention training that meets department standards developed in consultation with the federal centers for disease control and prevention that are based on evidence-based methods that have proven to be effective; and

   (2) lifesaving skills training that follows nationally recognized guidelines for hands-on psychomotor skills cardiopulmonary resuscitation training. Students shall be trained to recognize the signs of a heart attack, use an automated external defibrillator and perform the Heimlich maneuver for choking victims. The secretary shall promulgate rules to provide for the:

      (a) use of the following instructors for the training provided pursuant to this paragraph: 1) school nurses, health teachers and athletic department
personnel as instructors; and 2) any qualified persons volunteering to provide training at no cost to the school district that the school district determines to be eligible to offer instruction pursuant to this paragraph; and

(b) approval of training and instructional materials related to the training established pursuant to this paragraph in both English and Spanish.

R. Nothing in the minimum graduation requirements specified in Subsection O of this section affects:

(1) a school district's or charter school's authority to require more units for graduation than provided in this section; or

(2) a student's opportunity to take advanced placement or honors courses, international baccalaureate courses or distance learning courses offered by the public school or dual credit courses offered in cooperation with institutions of higher education.

S. Subject to the department's academic content and performance standards and other provisions of this section, every school district and charter school shall develop a graduate profile:

(1) that is specific to each community;

(2) that articulates the core academic competencies and subjects that are key to graduates' post-high-school success; and
(3) to which required units are aligned.

T. Units earned in health, algebra I and geometry prior to enrolling in high school shall satisfy unit requirements required to earn a New Mexico diploma of excellence.

U. The department shall adopt and promulgate rules to implement graduation requirements by no later than December 31, 2024. The rules shall include revisions to expand course offerings so that students have access to a range of rigorous academic options and career technical education courses and to establish guidance for the development of graduate profiles.

V. As used in this section:

(1) "capstone course" means a multifaceted academic and intellectual experience that may take a wide variety of forms and that culminates in a final product, performance or presentation explaining how the final product, performance or presentation explicates the chosen course to an evaluation panel convened by the public school to evaluate the quality of course and the final product, performance or presentation;

(2) "career technical education" means organized programs offering a sequence of courses, including technical education and applied technology education, that are directly related to the preparation of students for paid
or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations requiring an industry-recognized credential, certificate or degree;

(3) "career technical education course" means a course with content that provides technical knowledge, skills and competency-based applied learning and that aligns with educational standards and expectations as defined in rule;

(4) "career cluster" means a grouping of occupations in industry sectors based on recognized commonalities that provide an organizing tool for developing instruction within the educational system;

(5) "career pathways" means a sub-grouping used as an organizing tool for curriculum design and instruction of occupations and career specialities that share a set of common knowledge and skills for career success;

(6) "final next-step plan" means a next-step plan that shows that the student has committed or intends to commit in the near future to a four-year college or university, a two-year college, a trade or vocational program, an internship or apprenticeship, military service or a job;

(7) "graduate profile" means a document that a school district or charter school uses to specify the cognitive, personal and interpersonal competencies that
students should have when they graduate;

(8) "interim next-step plan" means an annual next-step plan in which the student specifies post-high-school goals and sets forth the coursework that will allow the student to achieve those goals; and

(9) "next-step plan" means an annual personal written plan of studies developed by a student in a public school or other state-supported school or institution in consultation with the student's parent and school counselor or other school official charged with coursework planning for the student that includes one or more of the following:

(a) advanced placement, international baccalaureate or honors courses;

(b) dual-credit courses offered in cooperation with an institution of higher education;

(c) distance learning courses;

(d) career technical education or work-based learning courses; and

(e) pre-apprenticeship programs.

W. The secretary may establish a policy to provide for administrative interpretations to clarify curricular and testing provisions of the Public School Code."

SECTION 2. REPEAL.--Section 22-13-1.2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2003, Chapter 153, Section 59) is repealed.