

Senate Education Committee

Ava Hawkes 271-4151

HB 194, relative to the release of student assessment information and data.

Hearing Date: March 23, 2021

Time Opened: 9:00 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:29 a.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Ward, Hennessey, Ricciardi, Kahn and Prentiss

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill:

I. Permits the department of education to collect student address information for the purpose of distributing assessment results.

II. Requires a testing entity to destroy student data at certain times.

Sponsors:

Rep. Cordelli

Rep. Ladd

Rep. Moffett

Rep. Hobson

Rep. Layon

Rep. Osborne

Sen. Avarad

Sen. Ward

Who supports the bill: Senator Ruth Ward, Representative Rick Ladd, Representative Glenn Cordelli

Who opposes the bill: Please refer to sign-in sheet.

Who is neutral on the bill: None.

Summary of testimony presented:

Representative Glenn Cordelli - Carroll, District 4

- Representative Cordelli introduced HB 194.
- This bill builds upon legislation from last session.
- The amended version simplifies the bill and replaces everything after the enacting clause.
- It would give NHDOE permission to send out state testing results to parents.
- In the past, this wasn't done on a timely basis.
- School districts typically hold results until the next fall. This is not timely.

- ESSA requires results be provided in a timely fashion and in an understandable format. If these requirements are not fulfilled, you risk the of loss of federal funds.
- Parents have a right to this information and results.
- In the contract with the state's testing agency, the agency has the ability to send out results themselves as done in other states.
- Regarding concerns about privacy, according to an attorney from NHDOE, there are already protections in place in the testing agency's contract with the state.
- Lines 10-18 is the substance of the issue at hand in this bill; NHDOE 'may' request testing agency to send results, not 'shall.'
- NHDOE can collect student address information solely for the purpose of sending out results.
- As required by federal law, reports available to parents must be informative and instructional so they can better understand their child's education and test results.
- Senator Kahn asked Representative Cordelli if there really are school districts in the state that don't distribute results in a timely way. Senator Kahn has heard the contrary from superintendents in his district.
 - Representative Cordelli said there was testimony from House members who noted that parents didn't receive results until parent teacher conferences in the fall.
- Senator Kahn expressed that, in his experience, schools and superintendents see these results as a really important communication device with parents, which is why they prefer to send them out. He asked Representative Cordelli if that has also been his experience.
 - Representative Ladd agreed that it is a great communication tool with parents.
 - Their House committee heard testimony from NHDOE that test results are made available from the testing agency to school districts the same day of test. There should be no reason for delay.
 - This would enable school districts to save time and staff efforts by letting the testing agency provide results to parents.
- Senator Kahn asked if NHDOE or the testing agency is providing the results to parents.
 - Representative Cordelli said current state law says NHDOE may provide the results or may request testing agency to provide results.
- Senator Prentiss asked Representative Cordelli if the bill intends to cut school out from the middle, by having test results go directly from the testing agency to parents. In her experience as a parent, test results came home with her daughter from school and conversation was had with the school if needed.
 - Representative Cordelli said that would be one option per the use of 'may' and not 'shall' regarding NHDOE's ask of the testing agency or school districts.

- He would agree that it would be most preferable for school districts to do it to satisfy federal requirements, however, it does not always happen in a timely manner.
- Senator Prentiss asked Representative Cordelli if school districts have a deadline to get test results to parents.
 - Representative Cordelli said that federal law simply says, “in a timely fashion.”
 - However, following hearings on SB 267 from last session, NHDOE’s interpretation was no later than June 30th of each year.
- Senator Hennessey asked Representative Cordelli how NHDOE knows if test results were not sent out in a timely manner. As she has received test results for her own children, it makes no difference who sends the results as there won’t be a dialogue with the school unless she initiates it. If you receive results sooner, dialogue can happen sooner.
 - Representative Cordelli said he has heard from parents and superintendents about this. There is an advantage to parents to have these results sooner rather than later. For example, receiving results before the summer months to allow work to be done over the summer.

Melissa White – Assessment Administrator, NH Department of Education

- NH SAS (Statewide Assessment System) is given to most students between grades 3rd through 8th, science assessed in 5th grade and SATs are used for 11th grade.
- There are also alternate assessments and dynamic learning maps available for English as a second language learners.
- They use multiple assessment products.
- Some test results, such as the SAT or DLM, are not immediately available. Students are able to access their results, via a web portal, within a month.
- Those are two special instances where reports may not be available by June 30th.
- NHDOE is currently working through their assessment vendor to open and create a parent portal by Spring 2022.
- Parents would plug in their contact information and receive results directly this way.
- This is still in the works.
- Senator Prentiss asked Ms. White what the testing window is for students currently, SATs aside. Senator Prentiss recalls a different timeline of testing and receipt of results for her child.
 - Ms. White said the testing window now is mid-March through June 11th each year. That way schools can use that entire window to administer tests.
- Senator Prentiss asked Ms. White if it matters when the test happens and if so, what is the significance.

- o Ms. White said states vary. NH assessments are to assess all of the student's understanding and mastery of courses in that grade level.
 - o They'll be tested on all course standards for that year.
 - o This window provides schools the ability to cover all content on assessment, depending on their content timeline.
- Senator Kahn asked Ms. White about privacy of information and if there are any tests currently that require your home address.
 - o Ms. White said NHDOE does not collect student addresses currently.
 - o The parent portal will allow, in the future, a method to securely access information.
 - o The department may be able to fulfill an individual request made by a parent to send results directly to them.
 - o As far as sending out paper reports, that is on school or school districts to do.

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