

THE NO SURPRISES ACT
S.B 1463

What's Happening: Students with disabilities may need extra time to prepare for the transition to college and career. In Arizona, they can stay in high school until age 22—but too often families are surprised senior year to find out their child will be graduating that spring, often unprepared and too early. Some students are developmentally delayed and need more time to acquire the knowledge and skills they need for life after high school. And their families need more time to prepare.

S.B.1463 creates the necessary resources and supportive policies schools need to design programs needed for our most significantly impacted students. The bill does the following:

Requires transition planning to begin freshman year.

No parent should be surprised during their student's senior year to discover their student is or is not graduating. Beginning freshman year course and program planning should begin and be reviewed each year. This also aligns with the requirement of schools to build Education and Career Action Plans for students beginning freshman year.

Directs the State Board to ensure schools receive equal credit for extended graduation rates in the A-F accountability system.

Our current accountability system gives greater weight to four-year graduations, however schools should not be penalized for developing appropriate programs for students under the law.

Permits parents to defer the receipt of a diploma, similar to a law that already exists in Florida.

If a student has not received the transition services they are entitled to under federal law they should not be required to graduate.

Authorizes the development of a statewide individualized education program (IEP) which will include a high school planning form.

Currently all school districts and charter schools develop or procure their own IEP system at their own cost. A statewide template will provide more consistency, facilitate student transfers and simplify training and advocacy support.

Forms a committee of the state agencies that administer key transition and support programs to collaborate and develop the resources families and students need to illuminate their path.

After graduation, services and accommodations are no longer guaranteed or protected; supports are uncoordinated and difficult to navigate; and eligibility criteria are different.

Directs the State Board of Education to develop standards for transition services and the department of education to develop model forms to report progress to families and students.

Although students may not require all services, the standards provide a common framework and language for schools and families to use for planning purposes.