

March 23, 2018

The Honorable Matt Michels
President of the Senate
500 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate,

I respectfully return to you Senate Bill 94, with my VETO. Senate Bill 94 is an Act to establish certain provisions regarding the opportunity scholarship program.

The bill's sponsors seek an alternate path for home-schooled students to receive the Opportunity Scholarship, outside the currently available mechanism. However, the bill holds home-schooled students to a lower standard than students who graduate from an accredited South Dakota public or private high school.

Today all students, including those who are home-schooled, are eligible to receive the Opportunity Scholarship by receiving a minimum ACT score of 28 or SAT score of 1250.

Another path to receiving the scholarship requires students to complete specific coursework and achieve a lower ACT score of 24. A required class offered by any accredited high school must meet minimum standards and the course materials for these classes may be reviewed at any time.

Under Senate Bill 94, classes completed by home-schooled students would not be subject to the same requirements because there is no accreditation requirement for home-school courses. To receive an Opportunity Scholarship, a student would only need to achieve the lower ACT score and produce a transcript of completed coursework issued by the parent or guardian. No one would have the ability to review course materials for these home-school classes as is the case for accredited schools.

I respect the right of parents to home-school their children. However, those students should not receive an unfair advantage over students who graduate from an accredited high school. Senate Bill 94 holds home-schooled students to a lower standard to receive the Opportunity Scholarship, and for that reason I ask that you sustain my veto.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Daugaard
Governor