

### **State to toughen high school requirements**

New Jersey plans to further tighten its high school graduation requirements in the coming years, including demands for students to take - and be tested on - specific courses like algebra and biology, Gov. Jon Corzine and other state officials announced today.

Saying that too many of today's high school graduates are unprepared for college or the workplace, Corzine led a group of education and business leaders in a State House news conference to trumpet plans for the state to tighten its requirements in all of its core subject areas, such as math, language arts and science.

"It is absolutely essential to make sure our high school standards and efforts are aligned with the real world that we live in today and the challenges of the 21st century," Corzine said.

The plan is modeled after a national program known as the American Diploma Project that has been joined by more than 20 other states.

But the move is likely years away, with the extensive work required on a number of fronts. And there are already worries here and in other states that increasing the rigor of course work and testing will only drive more students to drop out of high school, especially in urban districts where as many as a third of students don't graduate.