A bill to amend 1976 PA 451, entitled
"The revised school code,"
by amending section 1278a (MCL 380.1278a), as amended by 2009 PA 205.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

Sec. 1278a. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section
or section 1278b, beginning with pupils entering grade 8 in 2006,
the board of a school district or board of directors of a public
school academy shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil
unless the pupil meets all of the following:
(a) Has successfully completed all of the following credit
requirements of the Michigan merit standard before graduating from
high school:
(i) At least 4 credits in mathematics that are aligned with
subject area content expectations developed by the department and
approved by the state board under section 1278b, including
completion of at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II, or an
integrated sequence of this course content that consists of 3
credits, COMPLETION OF A 1/2-CREDIT COURSE IN FINANCIAL LITERACY AS
DESCRIBED IN SECTION 1165, and COMPLETION OF an additional
mathematics 1/2 credit IN MATHEMATICS, such as trigonometry,
statistics, precalculus, calculus, applied math, accounting,
business math, OR a retake of algebra II. A course in financial
literacy as described in section 1165. A pupil may complete algebra
II over 2 years with 2 credits awarded or over 1.5 years with 1.5
credits awarded for the purposes of this section and section 1278b.
A pupil also may partially or fully fulfill the algebra II
requirement by completing a department-approved formal career and
technical education program or curriculum that has appropriate
embedded mathematics content, such as a program or curriculum in
electronics, machining, construction, welding, engineering, or
renewable energy. Not later than 30 days after the effective date
of the amendatory act that added the immediately preceding
sentence, the department shall post on its website and submit to
the senate and house standing committees on education guidelines
for implementation of the immediately preceding sentence. Each
pupil must successfully complete at least 1 mathematics course
during his or her final year of high school enrollment. This
subparagraph does not require completion of mathematics courses in
any particular sequence.

(ii) At least 3 credits in social science that are aligned with
subject area content expectations developed by the department and approved by the state board under section 1278b, including completion of at least 1 credit in United States history and geography, 1 credit in world history and geography, 1/2 credit in economics, and the civics course described in section 1166(2).

(iii) At least 1 credit in subject matter that includes both health and physical education aligned with guidelines developed by the department and approved by the state board under section 1278b.

(iv) At least 1 credit in visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts, as defined by the department, that is aligned with guidelines developed by the department and approved by the state board under section 1278b.

(v) The credit requirements specified in section 1278b(1).

(b) Meets the online course or learning experience requirement of this subsection. A school district or public school academy shall provide the basic level of technology and internet access required by the state board to complete the online course or learning experience. For a pupil to meet this requirement, the pupil shall meet either of the following, as determined by the school district or public school academy:

(i) Has successfully completed at least 1 course or learning experience that is presented online, as defined by the department.

(ii) The pupil's school district or public school academy has integrated an online experience throughout the high school curriculum by ensuring that each teacher of each course that provides the required credits of the Michigan merit curriculum has integrated an online experience into the course.
(2) In addition to the requirements under subsection (1), beginning with pupils entering grade 3 in 2006, the board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil unless the pupil has successfully completed during grades 9 to 12 at least 2 credits, as determined by the department, in a language other than English, or the pupil has successfully completed at any time during grades K to 12 course work or other learning experiences that are substantially equivalent to 2 credits in a language other than English, based on guidelines developed by the department. For the purposes of this subsection, all of the following apply:
   (a) American sign language is considered to be a language other than English.
   (b) The pupil may meet all or part of this requirement with online course work.

(3) The requirements under this section and section 1278b for a high school diploma are in addition to any local requirements imposed by the board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy. The board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy, as a local requirement for a high school diploma, may require a pupil to complete the Michigan merit examination under section 1279g or may require a pupil to participate in the MIAccess assessments if appropriate for the pupil.

(4) For the purposes of this section and section 1278b, all of the following apply:
   (a) A pupil is considered to have completed a credit if the
pupil successfully completes the subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the department that apply to the credit.

(b) A school district or public school academy shall base its determination of whether a pupil has successfully completed the subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the department that apply to a credit at least in part on the pupil's performance on the assessments developed or selected by the department under section 1278b or on 1 or more assessments developed or selected by the school district or public school academy that measure a pupil's understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines that apply to the credit.

(c) A school district or public school academy shall also grant a pupil a credit if the pupil earns a qualifying score, as determined by the department, on the assessments developed or selected for the subject area by the department under section 1278b or the pupil earns a qualifying score, as determined by the school district or public school academy, on 1 or more assessments developed or selected by the school district or public school academy that measure a pupil's understanding of the subject area content expectations or guidelines that apply to the credit.

(5) If a high school is designated by the superintendent of public instruction as a specialty school and the high school meets the requirements of subsection (6), then the pupils of the high school are not required to successfully complete the 4 credits in English language arts required under section 1278b(1)(a) or the 3 credits in social science required under subsection (1)(a)(ii) and the school district or public school academy is not required to
ensure that each pupil is offered the curriculum necessary for
meeting those English language arts or social science credit
requirements. The superintendent of public instruction may
designate up to 15 high schools that meet the requirements of this
subsection as specialty schools. Subject to this maximum number,
the superintendent of public instruction shall designate a high
school as a specialty school if the superintendent of public
instruction finds that the high school meets all of the following
criteria:

(a) The high school incorporates a significant reading and
writing component throughout its curriculum.

(b) The high school uses a specialized, innovative, and
rigorous curriculum in such areas as performing arts, foreign
language, extensive use of internships, or other learning
innovations that conform to pioneering innovations among other
leading national or international high schools.

(c) A high school that is designated by the superintendent of
public instruction as a specialty school under subsection (5) is
only exempt from requirements as described under subsection (5) as
long as the superintendent of public instruction finds that the
high school continues to meet all of the following requirements:

(a) The high school clearly states to prospective pupils and
their parents that it does not meet the requirements of the
Michigan merit standard under this section and section 1278b but is
a designated specialty school that is exempt from some of those
requirements and that a pupil who enrolls in the high school and
subsequently transfers to a high school that is not a specialty
school meeting the requirements of this subsection will be required
to comply with the requirements of the Michigan merit standard
under this section and section 1278b.

(b) For the most recent year for which the data are available,
the mean scores on both the mathematics and science portions of the
ACT examination for the pupils of the high school exceed by at
least 10% the mean scores on the mathematics and science portions
of the ACT examination for the pupils of the school district in
which the greatest number of the pupils of the high school reside.

(c) For the most recent year for which the data are available,
the high school had a graduation rate of at least 85%, as
determined by the department.

(d) For the most recent year for which the data are available,
at least 75% of the pupils who graduated from the high school the
preceding year are enrolled in a postsecondary institution.

(e) All pupils of the high school are required to meet the
mathematics credit requirements of subsection (1)(a)(i), with no
modification of these requirements under section 1278b(5), and each
pupil is offered the curriculum necessary to meet this requirement.

(f) All pupils of the high school are required to meet the
science credit requirements of section 1278b(1)(b) and are also
required to successfully complete at least 1 additional science
credit, for a total of at least 4 science credits, with no
modification of these requirements under section 1278b(5), and each
pupil is offered the curriculum necessary to meet this requirement.