

Legislative Analysis



FOREIGN LANGUAGE GRADUATION REQUIREMENT

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

Senate Bill 175 (S-1) as passed by the Senate
Sponsor: Sen. Jim Stamas
House Committee: Education Reform
Senate Committee: Education
Complete to 6-11-18

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

BRIEF SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 175 would amend the Revised School Code to extend for three years the existing provision that high school students may fulfill part of the foreign language requirement needed for high school graduation by completing a Michigan Department of Education (MDE)-approved career and technical education (CTE) program or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts instruction. (The **Background** section, below, describes this requirement). The bill would also require reporting on students making use of that provision.

DETAILED SUMMARY:

Public Act 208 of 2014 (House Bill 4465) instituted the ability for part of the foreign language requirement in the Michigan Merit Curriculum to be met by completing a MDE-approved CTE program or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts instruction. That ability was extended to students graduating from high school in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, or 2020. Public Act 293 of 2014 (House Bill 5793)¹ corrected an oversight in PA 208, and also extended that ability to students graduating in 2021.

The bill would extend that possibility to students graduating in 2022, 2023, or 2024 as well.

Additionally, it would introduce reporting requirements, so that beginning September 1, 2018 and yearly thereafter, a school district or PSA would have to report both of the following to MDE:

- The number of students who partially or fully fulfilled one foreign language credit by completing an MDE-approved CTE program or curriculum in the previous school year.
- The number of students who partially or fully fulfilled one foreign language credit by completing visual or performing arts instruction in the previous school year.

The bill would take effect 90 days after enactment.

MCL 380.1278a

¹ House Fiscal Agency analysis for PA 293/HB 5793 of 2014: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2013-2014/billanalysis/House/pdf/2013-HLA-5793-0B22D18C.pdf>

BACKGROUND:

Michigan high school students must complete the Merit Standard Curriculum, or an alternative personal curriculum (developed by faculty with the student, parents, and the school superintendent), in order to earn a high school diploma. The Merit Curriculum, described in Sections 1278a and 1278b of the Code, entails the following course of study:

- 4 credits in English language arts.
- 3 credits in science, including at least biology and either chemistry, physics, anatomy, or agricultural science, or a program providing the same content (with a fourth science credit strongly encouraged). A student may fulfill the requirement for the third science credit by completing a Michigan Department of Education (MDE)-approved computer science program or curriculum or formal career and technical education (CTE) program or curriculum.
- 4 credits in mathematics, including at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II (or an integrated 3-credit sequence of this content), plus an additional math credit in trigonometry, statistics, precalculus, calculus, applied math, accounting, business math, a retake of algebra II, or a course in financial literacy. A student may also fulfill the algebra II requirements by completing an MDE-approved formal CTE program or curriculum that has appropriately embedded mathematics content as described in the law.
- 3 credits in social science, including at least 1 credit in U.S. history and geography, 1 credit in world history and geography, ½ credit in economics, and a civics course.
- 1 credit in health and physical education.
- 1 credit in visual, performing, or applied arts.
- **Beginning with the class of 2016, 2 credits that are grade-appropriate in a language other than English between kindergarten and 12th grade. For students graduating high school in 2016 to 2021 only, one credit of that requirement may be met in whole or in part by completing a department-approved formal technical education program or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts instruction that is in addition to the one credit of visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts that is also required to receive a high school diploma.**

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 175 would have a minimal cost increase for MDE and school districts and PSAs.

MDE would incur additional administrative costs to collect a new report from districts regarding the number of pupils who partially or fully fulfilled 1 credit in a language other than English by completing comparable coursework in CTE or visual or performing arts.

School districts and PSAs would incur additional administrative costs to track and comply with new reporting requirements.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.