A bill to amend 1976 PA 451, entitled "The revised school code," by amending section 1278a (MCL 380.1278a), as amended by 2018 PA 232.

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, and an additional mathematics credit, such as trigonometry, statistics, precalculus, calculus, applied math, accounting, business math, a retake of algebra II, or 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, such as a program or curriculum in electronics, machining, construction, welding, engineering, computer science, or renewable energy, and in that program or curriculum successfully completing the same content as the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the department-prescribed state high school assessment, as determined by the department. The department shall post on its website 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). The
1/2-credit economics requirement may be satisfied by completion of
at least a 1/2-credit course in personal economics that includes a
financial literacy component as described in section 1165, if that
course covers the subject area content expectations for economics
developed by the department and approved by the state board under
section 1278b.

(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,
or at least 1/2 credit in health aligned with guidelines developed
by the department and approved by the state board under section
1278b and at least 1/2 credit awarded by the school district or
public school academy for approved participation in extracurricular
athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical
activity.

(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. A school district or public school
academy is strongly encouraged to offer visual arts and performing
arts courses.

(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 K to 12 at least 2 credits
that are grade-appropriate in a language other than English or
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 pupils who graduate
or 2024 only, a pupil may partially or fully fulfill 1 credit of
this requirement by completing a department-approved formal career
and technical education program or curriculum or by completing
visual or performing arts instruction that is in addition to the
requirements under subsection (1)(a)(iv). The board of a school
district or board of directors of a public school academy is
strongly encouraged to ensure that all pupils complete at least 1
credit in a language other than English in grades K to 6. For the
purposes of this subsection, all of the following apply:

(a) American sign language (Sign Language) is considered to be a language other than English.

(b) Computer coding is considered to be a language other than English.

(c) The pupil may meet all or part of this requirement with online course work.

(e) Not later than September 1, 2018, and not later than September 1 of each subsequent school year, a school district or public school academy shall report to the department both of the following, in a form and manner prescribed by the department:

(i) The number of pupils who partially or fully fulfilled 1 credit in a language other than English by completing a department-approved formal career and technical education program or curriculum under this subsection in the immediately preceding school year.

(ii) The number of pupils who partially or fully fulfilled 1 credit in a language other than English by completing visual or performing arts instruction that is in addition to the requirements under subsection (1)(a)(iv) under this subsection in the immediately preceding school year.

(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. For a career and technical education credit, a school district or public school academy may supplement those content expectations and guidelines with additional guidelines developed by the school district or public school academy.

(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.

(6) 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 or SAT examination, as applicable, for the pupils of the high school exceed by at least 10% the mean scores on the mathematics and science portions of the ACT or SAT examination, as applicable, 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.