

# HOUSE BILL NO. 4326

February 24, 2021, Introduced by Reps. VanWoerkom and Yaroch and referred to the Committee on Education.

A bill to amend 1976 PA 451, entitled  
"The revised school code,"  
by amending section 1278a (MCL 380.1278a), as amended by 2020 PA  
158.

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:**

1           Sec. 1278a. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section  
2 or section 1278b, beginning with pupils entering grade 8 in 2006,  
3 the board of a school district or board of directors of a public  
4 school academy shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil

1 unless the pupil meets all of the following:

2 (a) Has successfully completed all of the following credit  
3 requirements of the Michigan merit standard before graduating from  
4 high school:

5 (i) At least 4 credits in mathematics that are aligned with  
6 subject area content expectations developed by the department and  
7 approved by the state board under section 1278b, including  
8 completion of at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II, or an  
9 integrated sequence of this course content that consists of 3  
10 credits, and an additional mathematics credit, such as  
11 trigonometry, statistics, precalculus, calculus, applied math,  
12 accounting, business math, a retake of algebra II, or a course in  
13 financial literacy as described in section 1165. A pupil may  
14 complete algebra II over 2 years with 2 credits awarded or over 1.5  
15 years with 1.5 credits awarded for the purposes of this section and  
16 section 1278b. A pupil also may partially or fully fulfill the  
17 algebra II requirement by completing a department-approved formal  
18 career and technical education program or curriculum, such as a  
19 program or curriculum in electronics, machining, construction,  
20 welding, engineering, computer science, or renewable energy, and in  
21 that program or curriculum successfully completing the same content  
22 as the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the department-prescribed  
23 state high school assessment, as determined by the department. The  
24 department shall post on its website guidelines for implementation  
25 of the immediately preceding sentence. Each pupil must successfully  
26 complete at least 1 mathematics course during his or her final year  
27 of high school enrollment. This subparagraph does not require  
28 completion of mathematics courses in any particular sequence.

29 (ii) At least 3 credits in social science that are aligned with

1 subject area content expectations developed by the department and  
2 approved by the state board under section 1278b, including  
3 completion of at least 1 credit in United States history and  
4 geography, 1 credit in world history and geography, 1/2 credit in  
5 economics, and the civics course described in section 1166(2). The  
6 1/2-credit economics requirement may be satisfied by completion of  
7 at least a 1/2-credit course in personal economics that includes a  
8 financial literacy component as described in section 1165, if that  
9 course covers the subject area content expectations for economics  
10 developed by the department and approved by the state board under  
11 section 1278b.

12 (iii) At least 1 credit in subject matter that includes both  
13 health and physical education aligned with guidelines developed by  
14 the department and approved by the state board under section 1278b,  
15 or at least 1/2 credit in health aligned with guidelines developed  
16 by the department and approved by the state board under section  
17 1278b and at least 1/2 credit awarded by the school district or  
18 public school academy for approved participation in extracurricular  
19 athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical  
20 activity.

21 (iv) At least 1 credit in visual arts, performing arts, or  
22 applied arts, as defined by the department, that is aligned with  
23 guidelines developed by the department and approved by the state  
24 board under section 1278b. A school district or public school  
25 academy is strongly encouraged to offer visual arts and performing  
26 arts courses.

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

28 (b) Meets the online course or learning experience requirement  
29 of this subsection. A school district or public school academy

1 shall provide the basic level of technology and internet access  
2 required by the state board to complete the online course or  
3 learning experience. For a pupil to meet this requirement, the  
4 pupil ~~shall~~**must** meet either of the following, as determined by the  
5 school district or public school academy:

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

8 (ii) The pupil's school district or public school academy has  
9 integrated an online experience throughout the high school  
10 curriculum by ensuring that each teacher of each course that  
11 provides the required credits of the Michigan merit curriculum has  
12 integrated an online experience into the course.

13 (2) In addition to the requirements under subsection (1),  
14 beginning with pupils entering grade 3 in 2006, the board of a  
15 school district or board of directors of a public school academy  
16 shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil unless the pupil  
17 has successfully completed during grades K to 12 at least 2 credits  
18 that are grade-appropriate in a language other than English or  
19 course work or other learning experiences that are substantially  
20 equivalent to 2 credits in a language other than English, based on  
21 guidelines developed by the department. A pupil may partially or  
22 fully fulfill 1 credit of this requirement by completing a  
23 department-approved formal career and technical education program  
24 or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts  
25 instruction that is in addition to the requirements under  
26 subsection (1) (a) (iv). The board of a school district or board of  
27 directors of a public school academy is strongly encouraged to  
28 ensure that all pupils complete at least 1 credit in a language  
29 other than English in grades K to 6. For the purposes of this

1 subsection, both of the following apply:

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

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

6 (c) ~~(b)~~—The pupil may meet all or part of this requirement  
7 with online course work.

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

17 (4) For the purposes of this section and section 1278b, all of  
18 the following apply:

19 (a) A pupil is considered to have completed a credit if the  
20 pupil successfully completes the subject area content expectations  
21 or guidelines developed by the department that apply to the credit.  
22 For a career and technical education credit, a school district or  
23 public school academy may supplement those content expectations and  
24 guidelines with additional guidelines developed by the school  
25 district or public school academy.

26 (b) A school district or public school academy shall base its  
27 determination of whether a pupil has successfully completed the  
28 subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the  
29 department that apply to a credit at least in part on the pupil's

1 performance on ~~the~~ assessments developed or selected by the  
2 department ~~under section 1278b~~ or on 1 or more assessments  
3 developed or selected by the school district or public school  
4 academy that measure a pupil's understanding of the subject area  
5 content expectations or guidelines that apply to the credit.

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

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

1 criteria:

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

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

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

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

23 (b) For the most recent year for which the data are available,  
24 the mean scores on ~~both the mathematics and science portions of the~~  
25 ~~ACT examination~~ **portion of the SAT examination and the science**  
26 **portion of the applicable state assessment** for the pupils of the  
27 high school exceed by at least 10% the mean scores on the  
28 ~~mathematics and science portions of the ACT examination~~ **portion of**  
29 **the SAT examination and the science portion of the applicable state**

1 **assessment** for the pupils of the school district in which the  
2 greatest number of the pupils of the high school reside.

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

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

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

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