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BILL ANALYSIS



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House Bill 4465 (Substitute H-3 as discharged)
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Sponsor: Representative Ed McBroom (H.B. 4465)
Representative Joel Johnson (H.B. 4466)
House Committee: Education

CONTENT

House Bill 4465 (H-3) would amend the Revised School Code to do the following:

- Revise the curriculum requirements of the Michigan Merit standard.
- In the case of a career and technical education credit, allow a school district or public school academy (PSA) to supplement subject area content expectations or guidelines of the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for a pupil's successful completion of a credit.

Under the Code, except as otherwise provided, a school district board or PSA board of directors may not award a high school diploma to a pupil unless he or she meets specific requirements, including successful completion of certain credit requirements of the Michigan Merit standard before graduation. The proposed changes are described below.

Mathematics. A pupil could partially or fully fulfill the existing algebra II requirement by completing within a formal career and technical education program or curriculum the same content as the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the MDE-prescribed State high school assessment, rather than completing a career and technical education program or curriculum with appropriate embedded mathematics content, as currently allowed.

Health & Physical Education. As an alternative to the required one credit in subject matter that includes health and physical education, a pupil could complete at least one-half credit in health aligned with MDE guidelines approved by the State Board of Education and at least one-half credit awarded by the school district or PSA for approved participation in extracurricular athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical activity.

Arts. The current requirements include at least one credit in visual, performing, or applied arts. The bill provides that a school district or PSA would be strongly encouraged to offer visual and performing arts courses.

Language. A pupil could successfully complete at least two credits in a language other than English in grades K to 12, rather than grades 9 to 12 as required currently. A pupil could partially or fully meet this requirement by completing an MDE-approved formal career and technical education program or curriculum or by completing additional visual or performing arts instruction. A school board or PSA board of directors would be strongly encouraged to ensure that all pupils completed at least one credit in a language other than English in grades K through 6.

House Bill 4466 (H-3) would amend the Code to provide that a pupil could complete anatomy or agricultural science credits instead of the chemistry or physics credits required

by the Michigan Merit standard; and require a pupil to be advised, during the process of developing and reviewing his or her educational development plan, that many of the curricular requirements could be fulfilled through career and technical education.

The bill also would do the following with regard to a personal curriculum, which may be developed to modify the Merit standard requirements for a particular pupil:

- Require the school district or PSA to develop a personal curriculum for a pupil upon the request of his or her parent or legal guardian, or a pupil who was at least 18 years old or was an emancipated minor.
- Require a group that develops a pupil's personal curriculum to include a teacher *or* the pupil's high school counselor or a designee, rather than a teacher *and* the counselor or designee, as currently required.
- Provide that an in-person meeting of the group would not be required.
- Prohibit the MDE, a school district, or a PSA from limiting or discouraging the number of pupils with a personal curriculum on any basis other than the best interest of each individual pupil.
- Require a school district or PSA annually to notify each pupil and a parent or legal guardian that all pupils are entitled to a personal curriculum.
- Revise the curriculum requirements of the Michigan Merit standard, as described below.

Mathematics. The Code's mathematics credit requirements may be modified as part of a personal curriculum if the pupil successfully completes at least 3.5 of those required credits, including algebra I and geometry, before completing high school, and successfully completes at least one mathematics course during his or her final year of high school. The bill would reduce the number of required credits to three. Additionally, the bill would refer to a mathematics credit completed during the final two years of high school, rather than a mathematics course completed during the final year.

The Code's algebra II requirement may be modified if the pupil meets certain conditions, including enrollment in a formal career and technical education program or curriculum and successful completion in that program or curriculum of the same content as one semester of algebra II, as determined by the MDE. The bill would refer to the algebra II benchmarks assessed on the MDE-prescribed State high school assessment. Additionally, the algebra II requirement may be modified if the student successfully completes one semester of statistics or functions and data analysis. Under the bill, one semester of technical mathematics also would satisfy this requirement.

Social Science, Health & Physical Education, & Arts. The Code requires three social science credits consisting of U.S. history and geography, world history and geography, economics, and civics. These requirements may be modified as part of a personal curriculum if certain criteria are met, including that the modification requires the pupil to complete one additional credit in English language arts, mathematics, or science or in a language other than English. Under the bill, the modification also could require the pupil to complete a formal career and technical education program. The bill would allow for similar modification with regard to health and physical education, and visual, performing, or applied arts.

The bills are tie-barred.

MCL 380.1278a (H.B. 4465)
380.1278b (H.B. 4466)

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

These bills would have a minimal negative fiscal impact on the Department of Education and an indeterminate impact on local units. The Department could see minor administrative costs in having to amend the current graduation requirements and content expectations.

These costs could be absorbed within the current budget without the need for additional FTEs or appropriations. The impact on local units would depend on the savings and costs each district would have with flexibility on graduation requirements and fewer restrictions on students' ability to develop a more costly curriculum. An example of potential savings is a high school allowing one of the foreign language requirements to be fulfilled in a lower grade that is not presently counted toward graduation, or allowing students to meet their algebra II requirement through a career and technical education course that is not presently allowed. These actions could lower the number of courses that high schools would need to offer in order to fulfill the graduation requirements, resulting in savings. An example of additional costs is a potential increase in the number of students requesting a personal curriculum or career and technical course, which costs more than a traditional content course. Local units would have different costs and savings across the State, so it is unknown whether these bills would have an overall negative or positive fiscal impact on local units.

Date Completed: 5-22-14

Fiscal Analyst: Cory Savino

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