

Legislative Analysis



21st CENTURY SKILLS

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House Bills 4269 and 4270 as introduced

Sponsor: Rep. Beth Griffin

Committee: Education

Complete to 4-29-19

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

SUMMARY:

House Bills 4269 and 4270 would amend the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) requirements under the Revised School Code by reorganizing and expanding certain categories.

Currently, as part of the requirements for a high school diploma, students must complete at least one credit in the visual, performing, or applied arts and at least two credits in a language other than English (described in greater detail in **Background**, below).

Instead, HB 4270 would replace those two requirements, comprising three credits, with three credits of “21st century skills,” and HB 4269 would state that the 21st century skills requirement could be met by completing any combination of three credits in any of the following:

- A grade-appropriate language other than English any time between kindergarten and twelfth grade, or coursework or other learning experiences that are substantially equivalent to credits in a language other than English, based on Michigan Department of Education (MDE) guidelines.
- Visual, performing, or applied arts, as defined by MDE.
- Computer science, computer coding, or a combination of the two.
- An MDE-approved formal career and technical education (CTE) program.

Now and under the bills, American Sign Language (ASL) counts as a language other than English; the foreign language requirement may be satisfied with online coursework; and a district or public school academy (PSA) is strongly encouraged to offer visual arts and performing arts courses.

Each bill would take effect 90 days after it is enacted into law.

Proposed MCL 380.1278f (HB 4269)
MCL 380.1278a and 380.1278b (HB 4270)

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills would have no fiscal impact for the state or for school districts, public school academies (PSAs), or intermediate school districts (ISDs).

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 an 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. In addition, a student can complete algebra II over a two-year period, and each student must take a math course during the final year of high school enrollment.
- 3 credits in social science, including at least 1 credit in United States history and geography, 1 credit in world history and geography, 1/2 credit in economics, and a civics course.
- 1 credit in health and physical education.
- 1 credit in visual, performing, or applied arts.
- 2 credits that are grade-appropriate in a language other than English between kindergarten and twelfth grade, beginning with the class of 2016. For students graduating high school in 2016 to 2024 only, 1 credit of that requirement may be met in whole or in part by completing an MDE-approved formal CTE program or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts instruction that is in addition to the 1 credit of visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts that is also required to receive a high school diploma.

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