

# Legislative Analysis



## MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

**House Bill 4271 (proposed substitute H-2)**  
**Sponsor: Rep. Gary Howell**

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

**House Bill 4282 (proposed substitute H-1)**  
**Sponsor: Rep. Roger Hauck**

**Committee: Education**  
**Revised 1-22-20**

### SUMMARY:

House Bills 4271 and 4282 would amend the Michigan Merit Curriculum (MMC) requirements in the Revised School Code.

#### **Statistics or Financial Literacy to meet Algebra II requirement**

As described in greater detail in **Background**, below, in order to be awarded a high school diploma, high school students currently must complete four credits in mathematics. This must include at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II (or an integrated three-credit sequence of that content), as well as a credit from a list of subjects including statistics and financial literacy.

The bills would retain the four-credit math requirement, but would allow a student to fulfill the algebra II requirement by completing a statistics course or the financial literacy course described in section 1165 of the School Code, as long as that course aligned with the subject area content expectations for math developed by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and approved by the State Board of Education. The bills would also incorporate the option of taking statistics or financial literacy as an alternative to algebra II into the mathematics options under a personal curriculum under the same circumstances.

Currently, section 1165 requires MDE to develop—and encourages districts to adopt—a model program on financial literacy incorporating financial education throughout the curriculum for grades K to 12, which must be based on the concept of achieving financial literacy through the teaching of personal management skills and the basic principles involved with earning, spending, saving, borrowing, and investing.

#### **OSHA safety training to meet physical education graduation requirement**

House Bill 4282 would also amend the Revised School Code to allow a student to fulfill the physical education graduation requirement by completing at least 30 hours of qualifying training provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Currently, as part of the Michigan merit graduation requirements (described in greater detail in **Background**, below), a student must complete at least one credit in subject matter

that includes both health and physical education or at least one half credit in health and one half credit awarded by the school district or public school academy (PSA) for approved participation in extracurricular athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical activity.

The bill would allow a student enrolled in a state-approved career and technical education (CTE) program<sup>1</sup> to fulfill the physical education requirement (accounting for half of the health and physical education graduation requirement, or one half credit) by completing at least 30 hours of educational training provided by OSHA relating to occupational health and safety standards applicable to general industry or construction.

As noted below, a student may already utilize an MDE-approved CTE program to fulfill the algebra II component of the math graduation requirements, the third science credit, and one credit in the world languages requirement.

Finally, the bill would reflect the replacement of the world languages requirement with the 21st century skills requirement proposed in House Bills 4269 and 4270.<sup>2</sup>

The bills would take effect 90 days after enactment.

House Bill 4271: MCL 380.1278b

House Bill 4282: MCL 380.1278a

## **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 (CTE) program or curriculum*.

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<sup>1</sup> Under the Michigan Administrative Code (R 395.241, Rule 11), an MDE-approved formal CTE program or curriculum consists of:

- (a) A coherent sequence of courses so that students gain academic, technical, and work behavior skills.
- (b) Instruction that includes classroom, laboratory, work based learning, and leadership opportunities.
- (c) Instruction that is supervised, directed, or coordinated by an appropriately certificated career and technical education teacher.
- (d) Consists of standards approved by the state board (R 395.243, Rule 13).
- (e) Must receive approval from MDE/Office of Career and Technical Education through an application process (R 395.244, Rule 14).

[https://dtmb.state.mi.us/ORRDocs/AdminCode/603\\_10574\\_AdminCode.pdf](https://dtmb.state.mi.us/ORRDocs/AdminCode/603_10574_AdminCode.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> House Fiscal Agency summary of House Bills 4269 and 4270: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2019-2020/billanalysis/House/pdf/2019-HLA-4269-4ED13966.pdf>

- 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. 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. 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 long as that course meets certain requirements.
- 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.

#### **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).

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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.