

HOUSE BILL NO. 5051

September 27, 2023, Introduced by Rep. VanWoerkom 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 2022 PA 105.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 1278a. (1) Except as otherwise provided ~~in~~**under** this
2 section or section 1278b, the board of a school district or board
3 of directors of a public school academy shall not award a high
4 school diploma to a pupil unless the pupil meets all of the
5 following:

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

4 (i) At least 4 credits in mathematics that are aligned with
5 subject area content expectations developed by the department and
6 approved by the state board under section 1278b, including
7 completion of at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II, or an
8 integrated sequence of this course content that consists of 3
9 credits, and an additional mathematics credit, such as
10 trigonometry, statistics, precalculus, calculus, applied math,
11 accounting, business math, a retake of algebra II, or, for only
12 pupils entering grade 8 before 2023, a course in financial literacy
13 as described in section 1165. A pupil may complete algebra II over
14 2 years with 2 credits awarded or over 1.5 years with 1.5 credits
15 awarded for the purposes of this section and section 1278b. A pupil
16 also may partially or fully fulfill the algebra II requirement by
17 completing a department-approved formal career and technical
18 education program or curriculum, such as a program or curriculum in
19 electronics, machining, construction, welding, engineering,
20 computer science, or renewable energy, and in that program or
21 curriculum successfully completing the same content as the algebra
22 II benchmarks assessed on the department-prescribed state high
23 school assessment, as determined by the department. The department
24 shall post on its website guidelines for implementation of the
25 immediately preceding sentence. Each pupil must successfully
26 complete at least 1 mathematics course during ~~his or her~~ **the**
27 **pupil's** final year of high school enrollment. This subparagraph
28 does not require completion of mathematics courses in any
29 particular sequence.

1 (ii) At least 3 credits in social science that are aligned with
2 subject area content expectations developed by the department and
3 approved by the state board under section 1278b, including
4 completion of at least 1 credit in United States history and
5 geography, 1 credit in world history and geography, 1/2 credit in
6 economics, and the civics course described in section 1166(2). For
7 only pupils entering grade 8 before 2023, the 1/2-credit economics
8 requirement may be satisfied by completion of at least a 1/2-credit
9 course in personal economics that includes a financial literacy
10 component as described in section 1165 —if that course covers the
11 subject area content expectations for economics developed by the
12 department and approved by the state board under section 1278b. The
13 1/2 credit in economics required under this subparagraph cannot be
14 fulfilled by completion of the 1/2 credit course in personal
15 finance described in subsection (3).

16 (iii) At least 1 credit in subject matter that includes both
17 health and physical education aligned with guidelines developed by
18 the department and approved by the state board under section 1278b,
19 or at least 1/2 credit in health aligned with guidelines developed
20 by the department and approved by the state board under section
21 1278b and at least 1/2 credit awarded by the school district or
22 public school academy for approved participation in extracurricular
23 athletics or other extracurricular activities involving physical
24 activity.

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

1 arts courses.

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

3 (b) Meets the online course or learning experience requirement
4 of this subsection. A school district or public school academy
5 shall provide the basic level of technology and internet access
6 required by the state board to complete the online course or
7 learning experience. For a pupil to meet this requirement, the
8 pupil must meet either of the following, as determined by the
9 school district or public school academy:

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

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

17 (2) Except as otherwise provided ~~in~~**under** this section, and in
18 addition to the requirements under subsection (1), the board of a
19 school district or board of directors of a public school academy
20 shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil unless the pupil
21 has successfully completed during grades K to 12 at least 2 credits
22 that are grade-appropriate in a language other than English or
23 course work or other learning experiences that are substantially
24 equivalent to 2 credits in a language other than English, based on
25 guidelines developed by the department. A pupil may partially or
26 fully fulfill 1 credit of this requirement by completing a
27 department-approved formal career and technical education program
28 or curriculum or by completing visual or performing arts
29 instruction that is in addition to the requirements under

1 subsection (1) (a) (iv). The board of a school district or board of
 2 directors of a public school academy is strongly encouraged to
 3 ensure that all pupils complete at least 1 credit in a language
 4 other than English in grades K to 6. For the purposes of this
 5 subsection, ~~both~~**all** of the following apply:

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

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

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

12 (3) Beginning with pupils entering grade 8 in 2023, the board
 13 of a school district or board of directors of a public school
 14 academy shall not award a high school diploma to a pupil unless the
 15 pupil completes a 1/2 credit course in personal finance that aligns
 16 with subject area content expectations developed by the department
 17 and approved by the state board under section 1278b. The 1/2 credit
 18 course in personal finance must fulfill 1/2 credit of mathematics
 19 required under subsection (1) (a) (i), 1/2 credit of visual arts,
 20 performing arts, or applied arts required under subsection
 21 (1) (a) (iv), or 1/2 credit of a language other than English required
 22 under subsection (2), as determined by the board of the school
 23 district or board of directors of the public school academy in
 24 which the pupil is enrolled. The 1/2 credit course in personal
 25 finance required under this subsection may be fulfilled through a
 26 department-approved formal career and technical education program
 27 or curriculum that aligns with the subject area content
 28 expectations developed by the department and approved by the state
 29 board for the credit under section 1278b.

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

10 (5) For the purposes of this section and section 1278b, all of
11 the following apply:

12 (a) A pupil is considered to have completed a credit if the
13 pupil successfully completes the subject area content expectations
14 or guidelines developed by the department that apply to the credit.
15 For a career and technical education credit, a school district or
16 public school academy may supplement those content expectations and
17 guidelines with additional guidelines developed by the school
18 district or public school academy.

19 (b) A school district or public school academy shall base its
20 determination of whether a pupil has successfully completed the
21 subject area content expectations or guidelines developed by the
22 department that apply to a credit at least in part on the pupil's
23 performance on assessments developed or selected by the department
24 or on 1 or more assessments developed or selected by the school
25 district or public school academy that measure a pupil's
26 understanding of the subject area content expectations or
27 guidelines that apply to the credit.

28 (c) A school district or public school academy shall also
29 grant a pupil a credit if the pupil earns a qualifying score, as

1 determined by the department, on assessments developed or selected
2 for the subject area by the department or the pupil earns a
3 qualifying score, as determined by the school district or public
4 school academy, on 1 or more assessments developed or selected by
5 the school district or public school academy that measure a pupil's
6 understanding of the subject area content expectations or
7 guidelines that apply to the credit.

8 (6) If a high school is designated by the superintendent of
9 public instruction as a specialty school and the high school meets
10 the requirements of subsection (7), the pupils of the high school
11 are not required to successfully complete the 4 credits in English
12 language arts required under section 1278b(1)(a) or the 3 credits
13 in social science required under subsection (1)(a)(ii) and the
14 school district or public school academy is not required to ensure
15 that each pupil is offered the curriculum necessary for meeting
16 those English language arts or social science credit requirements.
17 The superintendent of public instruction may designate up to 15
18 high schools that meet the requirements of this subsection as
19 specialty schools. Subject to this maximum number, the
20 superintendent of public instruction shall designate a high school
21 as a specialty school if the superintendent of public instruction
22 finds that the high school meets ~~all~~**both** of the following
23 criteria:

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

26 (b) The high school uses a specialized, innovative, and
27 rigorous curriculum in such areas as performing arts, foreign
28 language, extensive use of internships, or other learning
29 innovations that conform to pioneering innovations among other

1 leading national or international high schools.

2 (7) A high school that is designated by the superintendent of
3 public instruction as a specialty school under subsection (6) is
4 only exempt from requirements as described under subsection (6) as
5 long as the superintendent of public instruction finds that the
6 high school continues to meet all of the following requirements:

7 (a) The high school clearly states to prospective pupils and
8 their parents that it does not meet the requirements of the
9 Michigan merit standard under this section and section 1278b but is
10 a designated specialty school that is exempt from some of those
11 requirements and that a pupil who enrolls in the high school and
12 subsequently transfers to a high school that is not a specialty
13 school meeting the requirements of this subsection will be required
14 to comply with the requirements of the Michigan merit standard
15 under this section and section 1278b.

16 (b) For the most recent year for which the data are available,
17 the mean scores on both the mathematics and science portions of the
18 applicable state assessment for the pupils of the high school
19 exceed by at least 10% the mean scores on the mathematics and
20 science portions of the applicable state assessment for the pupils
21 of the school district in which the greatest number of the pupils
22 of the high school reside.

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

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

29 (e) All pupils of the high school are required to meet the

1 mathematics credit requirements of subsection (1) (a) (i), with no
2 modification of these requirements under section 1278b(5), and each
3 pupil is offered the curriculum necessary to meet this requirement.

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