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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 5606 (Substitute H-7 as reported)
Sponsor: Representative Brian Palmer
House Committee: Education
Senate Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to do the following:

- Require high school students, beginning with those scheduled to graduate in 2010, to earn the following credits before receiving a high school diploma: 4 in English language arts; 4 in math (including algebra I and II and geometry); 3 in science (including biology and chemistry or physics); 3 in social sciences; 1 in visual, performing, and applied arts; and 1 in subject matter that included both health and physical education.
- Require students to complete at least one online course or learning experience.
- Require the Department of Education (DOE) to develop subject area content expectations and guidelines for the required credits that were consistent with the State Board of Education's recommended content standards; that did not include nonessential attitudes, beliefs, or value systems; and that stated in clear and measurable terms what students were expected to know upon completion of each credit.
- Specify areas of focus that would have to be included in each of the content expectations and guidelines.
- Require the State Board of Education to approve the expectations and guidelines before they could take effect.
- Allow a school district or public school academy (PSA) to meet the content expectations for the curriculum requirements using alternative delivery methods including alternative course work, humanities sequences, or career and technical education.
- Require the DOE to develop a model policy regarding instruction in languages other than English, and encourage school districts and PSAs to provide instruction in accordance with that policy.
- Require each student, before entering high school and with the supervision of a counselor, to develop an educational development plan based on his or her individual career or educational goals.
- Allow a student to request a personalized curriculum modifying his or her individual curriculum requirements for 11th and 12th grade, or at the beginning of any semester after the student turned 16.
- Require the DOE to work with a school district or PSA that was unable to hire enough highly qualified teachers to meet the requirements of the bill, to develop a plan to allow the district or PSA to hire enough teachers.
- Require the DOE to submit to the Legislature an annual report on the overall success of the required curriculum, the rigor and relevance of the required course work, the ability of public schools to implement the curriculum, its impact on student success, and other information.
- Include students' performance on the Michigan Merit Exam in the criteria for accreditation of schools under the Code.

- Specify that a high school could not be accredited unless it ensured that all students had access to all elements of the curriculum required under the bill.
- Allow a school district or public school academy that was unable to meet any requirement under the bill to apply for an educational mandate rollback contract.

The bill is tie-barred to House Bill 4079 and House Bill 4080, which would amend the Revised School Code and the State School Aid Act, respectively, to allow a school district or PSA to apply to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for a waiver of a provision of those statutes, rules promulgated under them, or certain Federal requirements, as part of a performance-based contract with defined and measurable goals.

Proposed MCL 380.1278a

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

State: The Department would see increased costs associated with developing and implementing subject area content expectations that would apply to the credit requirements of the Michigan Merit Curriculum proposed by the bill. The magnitude of the costs would depend upon the current state of the Department's subject area content expectations and how well they would align with the Michigan Merit Curriculum.

Local: School districts and public school academies could see increased costs if the requirements of the high school curriculum were substantially different from what a district or academy currently implements, and if a district or academy could not quickly shift existing resources to satisfy the different requirements.

Date Completed: 3-20-06

Fiscal Analyst: Kathryn Summers-Coty

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