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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 403 (Substitute S-1 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)

Sponsor: Senator Wayne Kuipers

Committee: Education

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to permit the parent or legal guardian of a pupil who had transferred to a school district or public school academy (PSA) from out of State or from a nonpublic school to request, as part of that pupil's personal curriculum, a modification of the Michigan Merit Standard requirements that would not otherwise be allowed, if all of the following were met:

- The pupil had completed successfully at least the equivalent of two years of high school credit out of State or at a nonpublic school.
- The personal curriculum incorporated as much of the subject area content expectations of the Michigan Merit Standard as was practicable for the student.
- The personal curriculum included the civics course required under the Code.
- The personal curriculum required the pupil, during his or her final year of high school, to complete successfully at least one math course, which would have to be at least Algebra I or a course normally taken after Algebra I, depending on the circumstances.

The district or PSA could use appropriate assessment exams to determine what credits the pupil had earned out of State or at a nonpublic school that could be used to satisfy the requirements of the Michigan Merit Standard and the requirement that the pupil successfully completed the equivalent of two years of high school out of State or at a nonpublic school.

The bill would remove a requirement that the Department of Education develop or select and approve specific assessments that school districts and PSAs may use to determine whether a pupil has successfully completed a credit under the Michigan Merit Standard.

MCL 380.1278b

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

The Department of Education requested \$4.4 million from the School Aid Fund in FY 2007-08 for initial costs associated with developing eight end-of-course exams and administering four of them in FY 2007-08. Eliminating the requirement to develop and administer these tests would eliminate the State's need to spend that money. The Department estimates that developing and administering all 17 tests could cost up to \$15.0 million per year.

The cost to local school districts is indeterminate. If the Department did not develop assessments, the cost of developing and administering these tests would fall to local districts. Districts would be required either to develop or to purchase their own assessments. This additional cost to districts is unknown, and would vary depending on the decision of the districts.

Date Completed: 5-2-07

Fiscal Analyst: Kirk Sanderson