

Legislative Analysis



MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM: FOREIGN LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

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House Bill 5793

Sponsor: Rep. Lisa Posthumus Lyons

Committee: Education

Complete to 9-12-14

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5793 AS INTRODUCED 9-10-14

House Bill 5793 would amend the Revised School Code to make it clear that the foreign language requirement in the high school Michigan Merit Curriculum applies *beginning with pupils who entered 3rd grade in 2006* (a cohort who generally would enter the 12th grade in the 2015-16 school year). Reportedly, the bill aims to fix an inadvertent error in House Bill 4465 (PA 208 of 2014) that deleted the italicized phrase, unintentionally applying the requirement to students entering the 12th grade this school year (2014-15), which is the last cohort for whom the foreign language requirement did not apply.

Under the bill (and as current law intends), *beginning with students entering grade three in 2006*, the board of a school district or charter school cannot award a high school diploma to a student unless the student has successfully completed (during grades K to 12) at least two credits that are grade appropriate of a language other than English (or other learning experiences that are substantially equivalent).

Under current law, schools are strongly encouraged to ensure that all students complete at least one credit in a language other than English in grades K to 6.

(American Sign Language is considered a language other than English for the purpose of this requirement. Also under current law, students who graduate from high school through 2020 may partially or fully fulfill one credit of the foreign language requirement by completing a career and technical education program or visual or performing arts instruction.)

MCL 380.1278a

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the state or local units of government as it intends to maintain both current practice and the intent of HB 4465 in regard to the cohort for whom the foreign language requirement first applies.

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