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BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 646 (as introduced 7-24-07)
Sponsor: Senator Deborah Cherry
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 2-6-08

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Promise Grant Act to remove a requirement that a student who graduates from high school beginning in the 2010-2011 school year complete three credits in math and three credits in science in order to be eligible for grant payments during the student's first two years of postsecondary enrollment.

The Act provides for a \$4,000 grant to be paid to students who take the State assessment and enroll in an approved postsecondary educational institution within two years of graduating.

A student who received a qualifying score on the reading, writing, math and science portions of the State assessment is eligible for two payments of \$1,000 each, to be paid on or after October 1 during each of the student's first two years of postsecondary enrollment. The remainder of the \$4,000 grant is to be paid after the student completes two years of enrollment at an approved academic institution and completes 50% or more of the academic requirements for a bachelor's degree, earns an associate's degree, or receives a two-year certificate of completion in a vocational education program, if he or she has maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5.

In addition, the Act requires a student who graduates from high school in or after the 2010-2011 school year to complete at least three credits in math and three credits in science as required under the Michigan Merit Standard (described in the Revised School Code), in order to be eligible for a grant under the provisions described above.

(The Act also provides for Michigan Promise Grants for students who do not meet the State assessment qualifying score criteria. Such a student may receive a Michigan Promise Grant after completing 50% or more of the academic requirements for a bachelor's degree, earning an associate's degree, or receiving a two-year certificate of completion in a vocational education program, if he or she has maintained a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.5.)

The bill would remove the additional requirement for students graduating in or after the 2010-2011 school year.

MCL 390.1624

BACKGROUND

The Revised School Code requires a high school student to complete the following credit requirements of the Michigan Merit Standard, among others, before graduating from high school:

- At least four credits in language arts.
- At least three credits in science, including biology and either chemistry or physics.
- At least four credits in math, including at least algebra I, geometry, and algebra II, or an integrated sequence of that course content consisting of three credits, and an additional math credit.
- At least three credits in social science, including one credit in U.S. history and geography, one credit in world history and geography, one-half credit in economics, and the civics course required under the Code.
- At least one credit in health and physical education.
- At least once credit in visual arts, performing arts, or applied arts.

Under certain circumstances, a student may graduate by completing an approved personal curriculum that does not include all of the above requirements, although the personal curriculum must include as many of the Merit Standard requirements as is practicable for the student.

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government for fiscal years 2007-08 through 2010-11. If the changes in the bill are not adopted, there may be some cost savings for the State in fiscal years 2011-12 and beyond, because students graduating from private high schools that do not offer at least three credits in math and science, will not be eligible for Michigan Promise Grants. It is not known how many private high schools offer fewer than three credits in math and science. Under the Revised School Code, students at public high schools are required to complete at least four credits in math and three in science in order to graduate. The Department of Treasury reports that in the high school graduating class of 2006, there were 113,351 public school students and 7,884 private school students.

Fiscal Analyst: Ellen Jeffries

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.