

CURSIVE HANDWRITING INSTRUCTION

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House Bill 4483 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Brenda Carter
Committee: Education
Complete to 2-24-20

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4483 would amend the Revised School Code to require the Michigan Department of Education to develop or adopt, and make available to public schools, a model program of instruction on cursive as a type of penmanship.

Under the bill, beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, the board of a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) or the board of directors of a public school academy (PSA, or charter school) could incorporate the model program in their schools' curriculum.

Proposed MCL 380.1164c

BACKGROUND:

Generally, since the Common Core standards were introduced in 2010, omitting handwriting and cursive from the list of standards students are expected to reach by each grade, those skills have been offered less in schools. Some trace the decline as far back as 2005 in connection with increased access to computers.

However, in recent years, some states have reversed that trend. Illinois began requiring at least one unit on cursive writing in 2018-2019.¹ By July of 2019, Ohio required its Department of Education to include handwriting instruction materials in its model curriculum.² And beginning in the 2019-2020 school year, Texas began requiring students to be able to write legibly in cursive by the time they reach fifth grade.³ Beginning with a resurgence in 2016, in April of 2019 at least eighteen states had instituted some requirements regarding cursive instruction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would create a cost increase for the state and may increase costs for districts, PSAs, or ISDs that choose to incorporate the model program of instruction on cursive.

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) would incur costs to develop or adopt a model program of instruction on cursive. MDE estimates that the cost of either developing

¹<http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/fulltext.asp?DocName=&SessionId=91&GA=100&DocTypeId=HB&DocNum=2977&GAID=14&LegID=&SpecSess=&Session=>

² https://nxsTRIB-com.go-vip.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2019/04/hb58_08_en.pdf

³ <http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/rules/tac/chapter110/ch110a.html>

or adopting a program would equal around \$132,000. In addition, MDE estimates ongoing administrative costs of \$22,000 for 0.4 FTEs.

A district, PSA, or ISD that chooses to incorporate the program may incur costs for materials, for teacher training, and, if the program is not developed by MDE, for purchasing the program. However, districts, PSAs, and ISDs are not required to incorporate the program.

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