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Senate Bills 169 and 170 (as introduced 3-3-15)
Sponsor: Senator John Proos
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 3-17-15

CONTENT

Senate Bill 170 would amend the Revised School Code to do the following:

- Provide that a pupil would be eligible for a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) diploma endorsement if the pupil completed the requirements specified under the bill.
- Require a school district or public school academy (PSA), once it determined that a pupil met the endorsement requirements, to submit a certification to the Department of Education that the pupil was eligible for the endorsement.
- Require the school district or PSA to notate the endorsement in a pupil's transcript and provide the endorsement to the pupil.

Senate Bill 169 would amend the Revised School Code to require the Department, upon receiving a certification for a STEM diploma endorsement, to issue the endorsement and transmit it to the school district or PSA, or for an individual educated at home or in a nonpublic school, to the individual's parent or legal guardian, or the school principal or chief administrative officer, respectively.

The bills are tie-barred and would take effect 90 days after their enactment.

Senate Bill 170

The bill provides that a pupil would be eligible for a STEM diploma endorsement if the pupil, while in grades 7 to 12, successfully completed all of the following credit requirements: a) all applicable requirements of the Michigan merit standard for a high school diploma under Sections 1278a and 1278b of the Code; b) at least six credits in mathematics approved by the Department; and c) at least six credits in science approved by the Department.

Upon determining that a pupil had met those requirements, a school district or PSA would have to submit to the Department, in a form and manner prescribed by the Department, a certification that the pupil was eligible for a STEM diploma endorsement and a request for the Department to issue and transmit the endorsement to the school district or PSA. Upon receiving the endorsement, the school district or PSA would have to notate the pupil's transcript to indicate the pupil had earned a STEM diploma endorsement and provide the endorsement to the pupil.

Senate Bill 169

Under the bill, if the Department received a certification from a school district or PSA under Section 1278d (proposed by Senate Bill 170) that a pupil had met the requirements for a

STEM diploma endorsement, the Department would have to issue and transmit to the school district or PSA a STEM diploma endorsement for the pupil.

For an individual who was educated at home or in a nonpublic school, if the Department received a certification from the individual's parent or legal guardian or, for a nonpublic school, the principal or chief administrative officer of the school, that the individual had met substantially the same requirements as those under Section 1278d for a STEM diploma endorsement, the Department would have to issue and transmit a STEM endorsement for the individual to the individual's parent or legal guardian or, for a nonpublic school, to the principal or chief administrative officer of the nonpublic school.

Proposed MCL 380.1278e (S.B. 169)
Proposed MCL 380.1278d (S.B. 170)

Legislative Analyst: Jeff Mann

FISCAL IMPACT

State: The bills would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on the Department of Education. The bills include language that could result in either minor or more extensive involvement by the Department, which would result in varying fiscal impacts. If the Department merely had to provide guidance to schools and an electronic STEM endorsement for the diplomas that qualified, the result would be minor costs to the Department that could be covered by current appropriations. However, if the Department had to give approval to the math and science courses and produce physical endorsements for the diplomas that qualified, the costs would increase greatly and possibly require additional appropriations to the Department.

Local: At the local level, costs could vary depending on how much involvement would be required of the schools. If they needed to redesign multiple classroom curricula to meet Department guidelines or add classes, then schools would have to spend resources that might have been needed elsewhere. The costs of confirming that students met the qualifications for a STEM endorsement would be minor and fit within the current costs of determining whether a student meets graduation requirements. Costs also could vary depending on how endorsements were displayed on the diploma. If schools had to print alternative diplomas for students who met the qualifications, then schools could be required to spend extra resources on producing different sets of diplomas. If schools received a physical endorsement from the Department and it was then placed on the diploma, then minor costs would be incurred for placing the STEM endorsements on the correct diploma.

Fiscal Analyst: Cory Savino

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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.