

## Introduction

On April 20, 2006, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm signed into law one of the most comprehensive sets of high school graduation requirements in the nation called the *Michigan Merit Curriculum*. This law is a result of an extraordinary partnership between Governor Granholm, the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Legislature, and numerous education associations who worked together to better prepare students for greater success and to secure the economic future of our state.

As a result, a high school diploma in Michigan will soon say a lot more about the graduate whose name it bears. It will tell employers that our students have mastered the reading, writing, and math skills required for success in the workplace. It will tell college and university admissions officers and career and technical schools the student is ready for the rigors of post-secondary education. It will tell the world -- Michigan is committed to having the best-educated workforce.

The Michigan Merit Curriculum defines a common set of required credits for graduation and provides educators with a common understanding of what student's should know and be able to do for credit. It also provides students the learning opportunity, knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college or the workplace.

## MICHIGAN MERIT CURRICULUM

The Michigan Merit Curriculum requires students entering 8th grade in 2006, to obtain a minimum of 16 credits for graduation which could be met using alternative instructional delivery methods such as alternative course work, humanities course sequences, career and technology courses, industrial technology or vocational education courses, or through a combination of these programs.

The new law also requires students to have an online course or learning experience. For a student to meet this requirement, the student must meet either of the following, as determined by the school district or public school academy: 1) Has successfully completed at least 1 course or learning experience that is presented online, as defined by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE); and 2) The student's school district or public school academy has integrated an online experience throughout the high school curriculum by ensuring that each teacher of each course that provides the required credits of the Michigan merit curriculum has integrated an online experience into the course.

In addition, students entering the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade in 2006 will need to complete two credits of a language other than English in grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 prior to graduation. High School Content Expectations and Course/Credit Content Expectations and Guidelines are available on the Michigan Department of Education's high school web page at [www.michigan.gov/highschool](http://www.michigan.gov/highschool).

<b>Michigan Merit Curriculum High School Graduation Requirements</b>	
<b>MATHEMATICS* - 4 Credits</b>	
Algebra I*	Geometry*
Algebra II*	One math course in final year of high school
<b>ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS - 4 Credits</b>	
English Language Arts 9*	English Language Arts 11**
English Language Arts 10*	English Language Arts 12**
<b>SCIENCE - 3 Credits</b>	
Biology*	One additional science credit
Physics* or Chemistry*	
<b>SOCIAL STUDIES** - 3 Credits</b>	
.5 credit in Civics**	.5 credit in Economics**
U.S. History and Geography**	World History and Geography**
<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION &amp; HEALTH** - 1 Credit</b>	
<b>VISUAL, PERFORMING AND APPLIED ARTS* - 1 Credit</b>	
<b>ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIENCE*</b> Course, Learning or Integrated Learning Experience	
<b>LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH** - 2 Credits</b> In grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12	

\* Content expectations have been completed by the Michigan Department of Education.

\*\* Content expectations under development.

See page 19 for information on Personal Curriculum Modification Options.

This document is intended to provide general guidance. Due to the complexity of the law, policies and guidance will continue to evolve. For specific information regarding the law, please refer to Public Acts 123 and 124 of 2006. 11/15/06

