

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: HB 53a

49th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2010

Tracking Number: .180273.1

Short Title: Financial Literacy as School Math Requirement

Sponsor(s): Representatives Jack E. Thomas, Mimi Stewart, Benjamin H. Rodefer, and Others

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FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

AS AMENDED

The House Education Committee amendment changes language to provide that a financial literacy course that meets state mathematics academic content and performance standards “shall” qualify (rather than “may” qualify) as one of the four required mathematics units for high school graduation.

Original Bill Summary:

HB 53 amends the graduation requirements in the *Public School Code* to allow a financial literacy course that meets state mathematics academic content and performance standards to qualify as one of the four mathematics units required for high school graduation.

Fiscal Impact:

HB 53 does not contain an appropriation.

It is difficult to estimate a fiscal impact because it is unknown how many, if any, school districts and charter schools would exercise the option provided by HB 53. One cost would be the development of a curriculum for a financial literacy course for mathematics credit, which the Public Education Department (PED) estimates at approximately \$40,000.

Substantive Issues:

Legislation enacted in 2007 required schools to offer financial literacy for elective credit. According to the PED analysis, currently this elective financial literacy course is a half-year social studies course aligned to standards and benchmarks for economics and taught by social studies teachers. PED data provided to the Legislative Education Study Committee staff during the 2009 interim indicate that, in school year 2008-2009, a total of 229 students in two school districts were enrolled in elective financial literacy courses.

The PED analysis notes that:

- a financial literacy course for mathematics credit would have to be one year long (rather than a half of a year) and be taught by a teacher licensed to teach mathematics; and
- a PED survey of the 50 states' mathematics specialists indicates that no other state currently has a year-long financial literacy course aligned to mathematics standards.

Background:

In 2007, high school redesign legislation was enacted to require students entering grade 9 in school year 2009-2010 (the “class of 2013”) to take four units in mathematics (rather than three), one of which shall be the equivalent to or higher than the level of Algebra II (unless the parent submits written, signed permission for the student to complete a lesser mathematics unit). HB 53 leaves these requirements intact and allows a financial literacy course aligned to state mathematics academic content and performance standards to qualify as one of the four required mathematics units.

Related Bill(s):

HB 20 *Change Math Requirements for Graduation*