



## 104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB3301

Introduced 2/3/2026, by Sen. Chris Balkema

#### SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/27-605

was 105 ILCS 5/27-22

Amends the Courses of Study Article of the School Code. Provides that a school district is exempt from requiring pupils, beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, to complete 2 years of foreign language in order to graduate if the school district sends a written request to waive the requirement to the State Board of Education and includes evidence in the request that the school district does not have the employees necessary to provide 2 years of foreign language education to all pupils in secondary school within the school district. Provides that after receiving a written request from a school district, the State Superintendent of Education shall approve the request if the evidence included in the request is determined by the State Superintendent to be sufficient. Provides that a pupil is exempt from the 2-year foreign language requirement if the pupil or a school counselor, in consultation with the pupil, develops a postsecondary plan that is centered around postsecondary opportunities that do not include postsecondary education through an institution of higher education. Provides that the pupil or the school counselor shall send the postsecondary plan to the superintendent of the school district in order to be exempt from the 2-year foreign language requirement. Effective July 1, 2026.

LRB104 19166 LNS 32611 b

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**  
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section  
5 27-605 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/27-605) (was 105 ILCS 5/27-22)

7 Sec. 27-605. Required high school courses.

8 (a) (Blank).

9 (b) (Blank).

10 (c) (Blank).

11 (d) (Blank).

12 (e) Through the 2023-2024 school year, as a prerequisite  
13 to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil entering the  
14 9th grade must, in addition to other course requirements,  
15 successfully complete all of the following courses:

16 (1) Four years of language arts.

17 (2) Two years of writing intensive courses, one of  
18 which must be English and the other of which may be English  
19 or any other subject. When applicable, writing-intensive  
20 courses may be counted towards the fulfillment of other  
21 graduation requirements.

22 (3) Three years of mathematics, one of which must be  
23 Algebra I, one of which must include geometry content, and

1 one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science  
2 course. A mathematics course that includes geometry  
3 content may be offered as an integrated, applied,  
4 interdisciplinary, or career and technical education  
5 course that prepares a student for a career readiness  
6 path.

7 (3.5) For pupils entering the 9th grade in the  
8 2022-2023 school year and 2023-2024 school year, one year  
9 of a course that includes intensive instruction in  
10 computer literacy, which may be English, social studies,  
11 or any other subject and which may be counted toward the  
12 fulfillment of other graduation requirements.

13 (4) Two years of science.

14 (5) Two years of social studies, of which at least one  
15 year must be history of the United States or a combination  
16 of history of the United States and American government  
17 and, beginning with pupils entering the 9th grade in the  
18 2016-2017 school year and each school year thereafter, at  
19 least one semester must be civics, which shall help young  
20 people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and  
21 attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and  
22 responsible citizens throughout their lives. Civics course  
23 content shall focus on government institutions, the  
24 discussion of current and controversial issues, service  
25 learning, and simulations of the democratic process.  
26 School districts may utilize private funding available for

1 the purposes of offering civics education. Beginning with  
2 pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2021-2022 school  
3 year, one semester, or part of one semester, may include a  
4 financial literacy course.

5 (6) One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C)  
6 foreign language, which shall be deemed to include  
7 American Sign Language, (D) vocational education, or (E)  
8 forensic speech (speech and debate). A forensic speech  
9 course used to satisfy the course requirement under  
10 subdivision (1) may not be used to satisfy the course  
11 requirement under this subdivision (6).

12 (e-5) Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, as a  
13 prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil  
14 entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other course  
15 requirements, successfully complete all of the following  
16 courses:

17 (1) Four years of language arts.

18 (2) Two years of writing intensive courses, one of  
19 which must be English and the other of which may be English  
20 or any other subject. If applicable, writing-intensive  
21 courses may be counted toward the fulfillment of other  
22 graduation requirements.

23 (3) Three years of mathematics, one of which must be  
24 Algebra I, one of which must include geometry content, and  
25 one of which may be an Advanced Placement computer science  
26 course. A mathematics course that includes geometry

1 content may be offered as an integrated, applied,  
2 interdisciplinary, or career and technical education  
3 course that prepares a student for a career readiness  
4 path.

5 (3.5) One year of a course that includes intensive  
6 instruction in computer literacy, which may be English,  
7 social studies, or any other subject and which may be  
8 counted toward the fulfillment of other graduation  
9 requirements.

10 (4) Two years of laboratory science.

11 (5) Two years of social studies, of which at least one  
12 year must be history of the United States or a combination  
13 of history of the United States and American government  
14 and at least one semester must be civics, which shall help  
15 young people acquire and learn to use the skills,  
16 knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be  
17 competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives.  
18 Civics course content shall focus on government  
19 institutions, the discussion of current and controversial  
20 issues, service learning, and simulations of the  
21 democratic process. School districts may utilize private  
22 funding available for the purposes of offering civics  
23 education. One semester, or part of one semester, may  
24 include a financial literacy course.

25 (6) One year chosen from (A) music, (B) art, (C)  
26 foreign language, which shall be deemed to include

1 American Sign Language, (D) career and technical  
2 education, or (E) forensic speech (speech and debate). A  
3 forensic speech course used to satisfy the course  
4 requirement under subdivision (1) may not be used to  
5 satisfy the course requirement under this subdivision (6).

6 (e-10) Beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, as a  
7 prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, each pupil  
8 entering the 9th grade must, in addition to other course  
9 requirements, successfully complete 2 years of foreign  
10 language courses, which may include American Sign Language. A  
11 pupil may choose a third year of foreign language to satisfy  
12 the requirement under subdivision (6) of subsection (e-5).

13 A school district is exempt from requiring pupils to  
14 complete 2 years of foreign language in order to graduate  
15 under this subsection (e-10) if the school district sends a  
16 written request to waive this requirement to the State Board  
17 of Education and includes evidence in the request that the  
18 school district does not have the employees necessary to  
19 provide 2 years of foreign language education to all pupils in  
20 secondary school within the school district. After receiving a  
21 written request from a school district in compliance with this  
22 subsection (e-10), the State Superintendent of Education, or  
23 his or her designee, shall approve the request if the evidence  
24 included in the request is determined by the State  
25 Superintendent of Education, or his or her designee, to be  
26 sufficient.

1       A pupil is exempt from the 2-year foreign language  
2 requirement under this subsection (e-10) if the pupil or a  
3 school counselor, in consultation with the pupil, develops a  
4 postsecondary plan, as specified in Section 10-22.24b, that is  
5 centered around postsecondary opportunities that do not  
6 include postsecondary education through an institution of  
7 higher education. The pupil or the school counselor shall send  
8 the postsecondary plan to the superintendent of the school  
9 district in order to be exempt from the 2-year foreign  
10 language requirement under this subsection (e-10).

11       (f) The State Board of Education shall develop and inform  
12 school districts of standards for writing-intensive  
13 coursework.

14       (f-5) If a school district offers an Advanced Placement  
15 computer science course to high school students, then the  
16 school board must designate that course as equivalent to a  
17 high school mathematics course and must denote on the  
18 student's transcript that the Advanced Placement computer  
19 science course qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative  
20 course for students in accordance with subdivision (3) of  
21 subsection (e) of this Section.

22       (g) Public Act 83-1082 does not apply to pupils entering  
23 the 9th grade in 1983-1984 school year and prior school years  
24 or to students with disabilities whose course of study is  
25 determined by an individualized education program.

26       Public Act 94-676 does not apply to pupils entering the

1 9th grade in the 2004-2005 school year or a prior school year  
2 or to students with disabilities whose course of study is  
3 determined by an individualized education program.

4 Subdivision (3.5) of subsection (e) does not apply to  
5 pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2021-2022 school year or a  
6 prior school year or to students with disabilities whose  
7 course of study is determined by an individualized education  
8 program.

9 Subsection (e-5) does not apply to pupils entering the 9th  
10 grade in the 2023-2024 school year or a prior school year or to  
11 students with disabilities whose course of study is determined  
12 by an individualized education program. Subsection (e-10) does  
13 not apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2027-2028  
14 school year or a prior school year or to students with  
15 disabilities whose course of study is determined by an  
16 individualized education program.

17 (h) The provisions of this Section are subject to the  
18 provisions of Sections 14A-32 and 27-610 of this Code and the  
19 Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness Act.

20 (i) The State Board of Education may adopt rules to modify  
21 the requirements of this Section for any students enrolled in  
22 grades 9 through 12 if the Governor has declared a disaster due  
23 to a public health emergency pursuant to Section 7 of the  
24 Illinois Emergency Management Agency Act.

25 (Source: P.A. 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-743, eff. 8-2-24;  
26 104-387, eff. 8-15-25; 104-391, eff. 8-15-25; revised

1 9-24-25.)

2 Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1,  
3 2026.