



104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

SB4026

Introduced 2/6/2026, by Sen. Kimberly A. Lightford

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

105 ILCS 5/27-605

was 105 ILCS 5/27-22

Amends the Courses of Study Article of the School Code. With respect to the requirement that, beginning with the 2028-2029 school year, each pupil entering the 9th grade must, as a prerequisite to receiving a high school diploma, successfully complete 2 years of foreign language courses, requires a high school to offer 2 years of foreign-language course credit to any student who either (i) successfully passes a standardized test of language proficiency for a language other than English at the level required for the State Seal of Biliteracy or (ii) presents an official transcript demonstrating completion of 2 years of high-school equivalency in which the language of instruction was in a language other than English.

LRB104 20167 LNS 33618 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 high school must offer 2 years of foreign-language
14 course credit under this subsection (e-10) to any student who
15 either (i) successfully passes a standardized test of language
16 proficiency for a language other than English at the level
17 required for the State Seal of Biliteracy or (ii) presents an
18 official transcript demonstrating completion of 2 years of
19 high-school equivalency in which the language of instruction
20 was in a language other than English.

21 (f) The State Board of Education shall develop and inform
22 school districts of standards for writing-intensive
23 coursework.

24 (f-5) If a school district offers an Advanced Placement
25 computer science course to high school students, then the
26 school board must designate that course as equivalent to a

1 high school mathematics course and must denote on the
2 student's transcript that the Advanced Placement computer
3 science course qualifies as a mathematics-based, quantitative
4 course for students in accordance with subdivision (3) of
5 subsection (e) of this Section.

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

10 Public Act 94-676 does not apply to pupils entering the
11 9th grade in the 2004-2005 school year or a prior school year
12 or to students with disabilities whose course of study is
13 determined by an individualized education program.

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

19 Subsection (e-5) does not apply to pupils entering the 9th
20 grade in the 2023-2024 school year or a prior school year or to
21 students with disabilities whose course of study is determined
22 by an individualized education program. Subsection (e-10) does
23 not apply to pupils entering the 9th grade in the 2027-2028
24 school year or a prior school year or to students with
25 disabilities whose course of study is determined by an
26 individualized education program.

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

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

9 (Source: P.A. 103-154, eff. 6-30-23; 103-743, eff. 8-2-24;
10 104-387, eff. 8-15-25; 104-391, eff. 8-15-25; revised
11 9-24-25.)