



# North Dakota House of Representatives

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## **Representative Brandy Pyle**

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## **COMMITTEES:**

Appropriations

HB 1533

Good morning Chair Beard and members of the Senate Education Committee.

For the record, my name is Brandy Pyle, and I represent District 22. I appreciate the opportunity to speak before you today and introduce House Bill 1533.

This bill is brought forward in response to ongoing conversations within the school districts I represent, particularly regarding the concept of the "portrait of a graduate." This idea encompasses what we expect a graduate to know and be capable of as they leave the K-12 education system.

In the past, we focused primarily on the basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic. However, as the world around us has evolved—particularly with advances in technology and a deeper understanding of the complexities of our global society—what our students need to learn has expanded far beyond those traditional areas. No longer do students learn to type on typewriters; instead, they work with keyboards, access educational videos, and use interactive games to enhance their learning in subjects like languages, music, and math. Over the past five decades, the world has changed dramatically, and so too must our educational priorities.

Yet, amid all of these exciting changes, there are still essential life skills that need to be preserved in our curriculum. One such skill that has unfortunately often been sidelined is financial literacy. What was once a relatively simple industry, with partnerships between individuals and their local banks, has transformed. Today, consumers are responsible for navigating a vast array of financial decisions, including investing, borrowing, crowdfunding, and even gambling. Social influences have shaped our spending habits, and the financial landscape has become far more complex.

This is why financial literacy is so crucial. It is a foundational life skill—an integral part of the "portrait of a graduate." We want our students to graduate not only academically proficient but financially capable, prepared to navigate the many choices and challenges they will face as adults.

This bill proposes that financial literacy be made a standalone graduation requirement, ensuring that every student graduates with the basic skills necessary to manage their financial futures. I've also included an amendment for your consideration.

This aligns with the vision expressed by Governor Burgum last spring, when he highlighted the importance of financial literacy to both individual well-being and the broader economy. As he said, "When residents are financially healthy, there are far-reaching positive impacts on their personal well-being and the state's economy. Reducing financial stress improves mental health. Making good financial decisions decreases the

number of people with excessive credit card debt. More people are able to purchase homes, start or expand a business, and have increased expendable income."

Furthermore, the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) conducts a financial literacy study every three years, and the latest data from 2022 revealed that only 37% of adults in North Dakota feel confident about their financial knowledge. North Dakota has set ambitious benchmarks to improve financial literacy by 2027, aiming for:

- 66% of residents to have a higher overall financial knowledge score (up from 37% in 2021).
- 66% of residents to have emergency funds that last three months (up from 52% in 2021).
- A decrease in the percentage of residents experiencing financial anxiety from 56% to 33%.
- 66% of residents to have a retirement plan through their employer (up from 57% today).
- A reduction in the number of residents who find it difficult to cover expenses and pay bills each month, from 45% to 33%.

By including financial literacy as a graduation requirement, we take a crucial step toward meeting these goals and improving the financial well-being of future generations. I do have one amendment to one that would make this a requirement for all students.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to discussing this important bill further.

Thank You,

Brandy L. Pyle

Sixty-ninth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO

### HOUSE BILL NO. 1533

Introduced by

Representatives Pyle, Grindberg, Novak, O'Brien, Schreiber-Beck, Vollmer

Senators Cleary, Meyer, Axtman

1 A BILL ~~for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-21-02.2 of the North Dakota Century-~~  
2 ~~Code, relating to the addition of one-half unit of financial literacy to high school graduation~~  
3 ~~requirements for an Act to amend and reenact section 15.1-21-21 of the North Dakota Century~~  
4 ~~Code, relating to financial literacy and concepts of personal finance curriculum.~~

#### 5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

6 ~~—SECTION 1. AMENDMENT. Section 15.1-21-02.2 of the North Dakota Century Code is-~~  
7 ~~amended and reenacted as follows:~~

8 ~~—15.1-21-02.2. High school graduation - Minimum requirements. (Effective through~~  
9 ~~July 31, 2025)~~

10 ~~—1. Except as provided in section 15.1-21-02.3 and subsection 2, the following twenty-two~~  
11 ~~units of high school coursework constitute the minimum requirement for high school~~  
12 ~~graduation:~~

13 ~~—a. Four units of English language arts from a sequence that includes literature,~~  
14 ~~composition, and speech;~~

15 ~~—b. Three units of mathematics, which may include one unit of computer science~~  
16 ~~approved by the superintendent of public instruction;~~

17 ~~—c. Three units of science, consisting of:~~

18 ~~—(1) (a) One unit of biology;~~

19 ~~—(b) One unit of chemistry; and~~

20 ~~—(c) One unit of physics; or~~

- 1 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) (a) One unit of biology;~~  
2 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) One unit of physical science; and~~  
3 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (c) One unit or two one-half units of any other science which may include~~  
4 ~~one unit of computer science or cybersecurity approved by the~~  
5 ~~superintendent of public instruction;~~  
6 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ d. Three units of social studies, including:~~  
7 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) One unit of United States history;~~  
8 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) (a) One-half unit of United States government and one-half unit of~~  
9 ~~economics; or~~  
10 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) One unit of problems of democracy; and~~  
11 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) One unit or two one-half units of any other social studies, which may include~~  
12 ~~civics, civilization, geography and history, multicultural studies, North Dakota~~  
13 ~~studies, psychology, sociology, and world history;~~  
14 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ e. (1) One unit of physical education; or~~  
15 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) One-half unit of physical education and one-half unit of health;~~  
16 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ f. Three units of:~~  
17 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) Foreign languages;~~  
18 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Native American languages;~~  
19 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Fine arts; or~~  
20 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Career and technical education courses; and~~  
21 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ g. Any five additional units.~~  
22 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ 2. If approved by the board of a school district or nonpublic school, a school district or~~  
23 ~~nonpublic school may develop eligibility criteria or programmatic requirements to allow~~  
24 ~~a passing score on the relevant portions of the GED assessment to receive credit for~~  
25 ~~the corresponding requirements of subdivisions a through d of subsection 1.~~  
26 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ **High school graduation – Minimum requirements. (Effective after July 31, 2025)**~~  
27 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Except as provided in section 15.1-21-02.3 and subsection 2, the following twenty-two~~  
28 ~~units of high school coursework constitute the minimum requirement for high school~~  
29 ~~graduation:~~  
30 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ a. Four units of English language arts from a sequence that includes literature,~~  
31 ~~composition, and speech;~~

- 1 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ b. Three units of mathematics, which may include one unit of computer science and~~  
2 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ one-half unit of financial literacy approved by the superintendent of public~~  
3 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ instruction;~~
- 4 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ c. Three units of science, consisting of:~~
- 5 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) (a) One unit of biology;~~  
6 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) One unit of chemistry; and~~  
7 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (c) One unit of physics; or~~
- 8 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) (a) One unit of biology;~~  
9 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) One unit of physical science; and~~  
10 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (c) One unit or two one-half units of any other science which may include~~  
11 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ one unit of computer science or cybersecurity approved by the~~  
12 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ superintendent of public instruction;~~
- 13 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ d. Three units of social studies, including:~~
- 14 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) One unit of United States history, including Native American tribal history;~~
- 15 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) (a) One-half unit of United States government and one-half unit of~~  
16 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ economics; or~~
- 17 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (b) One unit of problems of democracy; and~~
- 18 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) One unit or two one-half units of any other social studies, which may include~~  
19 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ civics, civilization, geography and history, multicultural studies, North Dakota~~  
20 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ studies, psychology, sociology, and world history, and financial literacy;~~
- 21 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ e. (1) One unit of physical education; or~~  
22 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) One-half unit of physical education and one-half unit of health;~~
- 23 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ f. Three units of:~~
- 24 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (1) Foreign languages;~~  
25 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (2) Native American languages;~~  
26 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (3) Fine arts; or~~
- 27 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ (4) Career and technical education courses, which may include one-half unit of~~  
28 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ financial literacy;~~
- 29 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ g. Any five additional units; and~~
- 30 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ h. One unit of computer science or cybersecurity whether under subdivision b, c, or~~  
31 ~~\_\_\_\_\_ both; and~~

~~i. One-half unit of financial literacy, which may be used to satisfy a requirement under subdivisions b, d, or f.~~

~~j. The requirements of subdivision h are waived if the student has completed a computer science and cybersecurity integration plan approved by the school board.~~

~~2. If approved by the board of a school district or nonpublic school, a school district or nonpublic school may develop eligibility criteria or programmatic requirements to allow a passing score on the relevant portions of the GED assessment to receive credit for the corresponding requirements of subdivisions a through d of subsection 1.~~

**SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 15.1-21-21 of the North Dakota Century Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

**15.1-21-21. Financial literacy - Concepts of personal finance - Inclusion in curriculum.**

1. ~~Beginning July 1, 2010, each~~ Each school district shall require each student to complete one-half unit of financial literacy or ensure that its curriculum for either economics or problems of democracy includes the exposure of students to concepts of personal finance, including:
  - a. ~~Checkbook mechanics, including writing checks, balancing, and statement reconciliation~~ Budgeting and money management;
  - b. Saving ~~for larger purchases~~ and investing;
  - c. Credit, ~~including credit card usage, interest, and fees~~ and debt management;
  - d. ~~Earning power, including jobs for teenagers~~ Banking and financial services;
  - e. Taxation and ~~paycheck withholdings~~ income;
  - f. ~~College costs~~ Consumer skills and smart spending;
  - g. ~~Making and living within a budget~~ Insurance and risk management; and
  - h. ~~Mortgages, retirement savings, and investments~~ College and career financial planning;
  - i. Retirement planning; and
  - j. Entrepreneurship and economic concepts.
2. Upon written request, the superintendent of public instruction may allow a school district annually to select courses other than economics or problems of democracy for purposes of exposing students to the concepts of personal finance, as listed in this

- 1 section, provided the school district can demonstrate that the number of students
- 2 exposed to the concepts in the other selected courses would meet or exceed the
- 3 number of students exposed under the requirements of subsection 1.
- 4 3. The requirements of this section may be provided by the regular classroom teacher of
- 5 the course in which the concepts of personal finance are incorporated.