

1 **State of Arkansas**
2 **79th General Assembly**
3 **Regular Session, 1993**
4 **By: Senator Bell**

A Bill

SENATE BILL 332

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 "AN ACT TO AMEND ARKANSAS CODE ANNOTATED §§ 6-15-401 ET
9 SEQ. TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE COMPETENCY AND OUTCOME-
10 BASED ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR EVALUATING PERFORMANCE IN THE
11 PUBLIC SCHOOLS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

Subtitle

14 "TO PROVIDE A COMPREHENSIVE COMPETENCY AND OUTCOME-BASED
15 ASSESSMENT PROGRAM FOR EVALUATING PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC
16 SCHOOLS."
17

18
19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-401 is hereby amended to read as follows:

22 "6-15-401. Title.

23 The title of this subchapter shall be the Competency and Outcome-Based
24 Assessment Act ._"

25
26 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-402 is hereby amended to read as
27 follows:

28 "6-15-402. Purpose.

29 (a) The purpose of the Competency and Outcome-Based Assessment Act is
30 to provide the statutory framework necessary to ensure that all students in
31 the public schools of this state demonstrate their competency in academic
32 subjects and higher order thinking skills consistent with state and national
33 goals for the year 2000.

34 (b) The purposes of the assessment program developed pursuant to the
35 provisions of the Competency and Outcome-Based Assessment Act shall be to:

- 1 (1) Improve classroom instruction and learning;
- 2 (2) Provide public accountability by exemplifying expected
- 3 achievement levels and reporting on student and school performance;
- 4 (3) Provide program evaluation data;
- 5 (4) Assist policymakers in decision making."

6
7 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-15-403 is hereby amended to read as
8 follows:

9 "6-15-403. Definitions. The State Board of Education through the
10 Department of Education is hereby authorized to:

11 (1) Develop a comprehensive testing and assessment program, which
12 utilizes the most current and effective testing, evaluation, and assessment
13 research information, designed to achieve the purposes set forth in this
14 subchapter.

15 (2) Promulgate such rules and regulations as may be necessary to
16 administer the testing program during the transition period and to develop and
17 implement the comprehensive testing and assessment program.

18 (3) Employ staff and enter into contracts as may be necessary to carry
19 out the provisions of this subchapter."

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21 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-15-404 is hereby amended to read as
22 follows:

23 "6-15-404. Authority of State Board of Education.

24 (a) During a transition period, to be determined by the State Board of
25 Education and to end no later than June 30, 1996, the Department of Education
26 shall continue to test public school students at grades three (3), six (6),
27 and eight (8) using the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test, or similar
28 criterion-referenced, basic skills tests in areas to include reading, language
29 arts, and mathematics. However, the State Board of Education may grant a
30 waiver of this requirement to any school or district participating in a
31 Department of Education-sponsored pilot program and using any new curricula or
32 alternative assessment.

33 (b) For any school or district receiving a waiver in subsection (a),
34 the Department of Education shall select the type of assessment method that
35 the school or district will administer.

1 (c) During the transition period, the State Board of Education shall
2 continue to establish expected levels of mastery on the Arkansas Minimum
3 Performance Test or its successor.

4 (d) During the transition period, a student failing to achieve expected
5 levels of mastery on the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test or its successor
6 shall be evaluated by the student_s school principal, teachers, and counselor
7 who shall jointly develop an academic skills plan to assist the student in
8 achieving mastery in subject areas in which performance is deficient.

9 (e) During the transition period, any school or school district that
10 has a definable group of students failing to achieve mastery levels on the
11 Arkansas Minimum Performance Test or its successor at a rate significantly
12 different from that of the general student population in Arkansas shall
13 develop and implement a plan, reviewed and approved by the Department of
14 Education, to assist the identifiable group achieve mastery.

15 (f) During the transition period, performance on the Arkansas Minimum
16 Performance Test or its successor may not be used as the sole criterion for
17 promotion or retention of a student.

18 (g) During the transition period, any school or school district that
19 has less than eighty-five percent (85%) of its students achieving mastery on
20 the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test or its successor shall participate in a
21 school improvement program approved by the Department of Education.

22 (h) During the transition period, the State Board of Education is
23 hereby authorized to promulgate regulations regarding the appropriate use of
24 the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test for students with disabilities and under
25 what circumstances the scores of these students shall be included in
26 calculating a school_s or school district_s mastery percentages.

27 (i) During the transition period, the Department of Education shall
28 continue to test public school students at grades four (4), seven (7), and ten
29 (10) with a nationally norm-referenced test to be selected by the State Board
30 of Education.

31 (j) During the transition period, any school or district that has more
32 than twenty-five percent (25%) of its students in the lowest quartile of the
33 norm-referenced test shall participate in a school improvement plan approved
34 by the Department of Education.

35 (k) During the transition period, the Department of Education and the

1 local school districts shall annually compile and disseminate to the general
2 public results of administrating the Arkansas Minimum Performance Test or its
3 successor and the nationally norm-referenced test."

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5 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-15-405 is hereby amended to read as
6 follows:

7 "6-15-405. All school districts to participate - Reports.

8 (a) As a part of the comprehensive testing and assessment
9 program, the Department of Education shall institute a *comprehensive*
10 *competency based testing and assessment program that includes teacher*
11 *observations and classroom evaluations* in grades one (1), two (2), and three
12 (3) in reading and mathematics, beginning in the 1993-94 school year.

13 (b) The State Board of Education shall establish a minimum expected
14 level of achievement for the grades one (1), two (2), and three (3) reading
15 and mathematics test.

16 (c) Any student who fails to achieve the minimum expected level on any
17 of the tests shall participate in a program specifically designed to achieve
18 competency."

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20 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code § 6-15-406 is hereby amended to read as
21 follows:

22 "6-15-406. Basic skills. The comprehensive testing and assessment
23 program to be developed by the State Board of Education shall include, but is
24 not limited to, the following components or characteristics:

25 (1) Performance assessments at grade levels selected to be tested by
26 the Department of Education;

27 (2) Performance assessments of the core concepts, abilities, thinking,
28 and problem-solving skills defined in the Arkansas Learner Outcomes and the
29 Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks;

30 (3) Longitudinal data collection;

31 (4) A variety of testing and assessment methods;

32 (5) Construction of a data base that will allow the Department of
33 Education, over time, to identify those instructional strategies or programs
34 that are particularly successful or unsuccessful; and

35 (6) Meaningful comparisons of Arkansas students with those of other

1 states, regions, and the nation."

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3 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code § 6-15-407 is hereby amended to read as
4 follows:

5 "6-15-407. Basic competency tests generally.

6 (a) Beginning with the 1996-97 school year, all students must
7 successfully complete an outcome-based assessment examination in order to
8 receive a high school diploma.

9 (b) Students may take this examination during the eleventh (11th)
10 and/or twelfth (12th) grade.

11 (c) School districts shall develop academic improvement plans for each
12 student who fails to pass this examination.

13 (d) However, students with disabilities, as defined by the Individuals
14 With Disabilities Education Act, must receive a high school diploma if they
15 fulfill the requirements of their Individual Educational Program.

16 (e) Students with disabilities, as defined by Section 504 of the
17 Rehabilitation Act of 1973, shall only be required to take this test if it
18 appropriately measures the student_s abilities. The local school district
19 shall determine whether the assessment tool appropriately measures a student_s
20 abilities and whether a particular student must successfully pass the outcomes
21 based assessment before receiving a high school diploma.

22 (f) The Arkansas Department of Education is authorized to do any and
23 all things necessary to develop an outcomes based assessment test to fulfill
24 the requirements of this subsection.

25 (g) The State Board of Education is authorized to promulgate rules and
26 regulations to implement this program.

27 (h) *Competency and Outcome-Based Assessment means an age appropriate*
28 *test or assessment of student academic knowledge in science, arts, humanities,*
29 *mathematics, history, social studies, language, communication, foreign*
30 *language, physical education, health, technology, or related academic skills.*

31 (i) *Neither Competency and Outcome-Based Assessment nor any other*
32 *assessment or testing procedure used in the public schools shall test or*
33 *assess student religious beliefs, political beliefs, ethics, attitudes or*
34 *values.*

35 (j) *Public school testing or assessment of student self-esteem, mental*

1 health, emotional health, or home or family life shall not be permitted for
2 the purpose of determining academic grades or high school graduation.

3 (k) The non-academic assessment of student conduct for the purpose of
4 encouraging good behavior and decorum at school shall be permitted."

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6 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code §§ 6-15-408 through 6-15-413 are hereby
7 repealed.

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9 SECTION 9. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent
10 nature are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas
11 Code Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

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13 SECTION 10. If any provision of this act or the application thereof to
14 any person or circumstance is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect
15 other provisions or applications of the act which can be given effect without
16 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this
17 act are declared to be severable.

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19 SECTION 11. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this act are
20 hereby repealed.

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/s/ Senator Bell

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As Engrossed: 2/15/93 2/22/93 2/23/93 3/3/93

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