

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2003

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1144

4
5 By: Representative Mahony
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8
9 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH SPANISH AS ARKANSAS' FIRST
10 FOREIGN LANGUAGE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
11

Subtitle

12
13 TO ESTABLISH SPANISH AS ARKANSAS' FIRST
14 FOREIGN LANGUAGE.
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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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19 SECTION 1. This act shall be known as the "Spanish as Arkansas'
20 Primary Foreign Language Act of 2003".
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22 SECTION 2. The General Assembly finds that the number of people
23 settling in Arkansas who are Hispanic immigrants or are of Hispanic
24 background is rapidly increasing, and that since the signing of the North
25 American Free Trade Agreement, it is becoming obvious that Arkansans who are
26 proficient in Spanish have economic and cultural advantages over those
27 persons who are not. It is the purpose of the General Assembly that this act
28 will enable students in Arkansas to be better prepared to live and work in
29 the Twenty-first Century.
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31 SECTION 3. Beginning with the 2006-2007 school year, each local school
32 district in Arkansas shall offer no less than two (2) years of Spanish as a
33 foreign language to students in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).
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35 SECTION 4. (a) The State Board of Education shall:

36 (1) Assist local school districts in the implementation of this



1 act;

2 (2) Establish a Department of Education Spanish Language
3 Incentive Program; and

4 (3) Apply for federal grants to establish or improve foreign
5 language instruction in local school districts.

6 (b)(1) The State Board of Higher Education and the state supported
7 colleges and universities shall work together to ensure that an adequate
8 number of teachers certified to teach Spanish are available for employment in
9 local school districts.

10 (2)(A) The State Board of Education shall report to the Senate
11 and House Interim Committees on Education on or before July 1, 2004, the
12 steps necessary to achieve the requirements of section 3 of this act.

13 (B) The State Board of Education and the State Board of
14 Higher Education shall consider targeted scholarships and alternative
15 certification as steps to assist school districts with achieving the
16 requirements of section 3 of this act.

17 (c) Rules for the implementation of this act, which shall include an
18 exemption for existing instructors, shall be recommended in the July 1, 2004
19 report and shall include, but not be limited to, a recommendation that:

20 (1) A school district that employs a teacher teaching a foreign
21 language other than Spanish before July 1, 2006 may continue to offer that
22 foreign language instead of Spanish until the teacher discontinues his or her
23 employment as a teacher of that foreign language;

24 (2) A teacher of a foreign language other than Spanish may
25 transfer to another school district and that school district may continue to
26 offer that foreign language instead of Spanish until the teacher discontinues
27 his or her employment as a teacher of that foreign language if the teacher of
28 the foreign language was employed by a school district before July 1, 2006;
29 and

30 (3) After July 1, 2006, a teacher of a foreign language other
31 than Spanish may be hired to teach a foreign language other than Spanish if
32 the school district offers at least two (2) years of Spanish to students in
33 grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

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35 SECTION 5. (a) The State Board of Education shall establish a
36 relationship with the appropriate entities of the Estados Unidos de Mexico to

1 develop cultural exchanges, mutual planning, and if possible, sister-state
2 relationships with various estados.

3 (b) The sister-state relationships shall be developed in consultation
4 with the Arkansas Economic Development Commission.

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