

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

SENATE BILL 812

4
5 By: Senator Gullett
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7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS DISTANCE LEARNING
10 DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ACT OF 2003; TO REPEAL THE
11 ARKANSAS DISTANCE LEARNING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT
12 ACT OF 1995; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

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15 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS DISTANCE
16 LEARNING DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ACT OF
17 2003; TO REPEAL THE ARKANSAS DISTANCE
18 LEARNING DEMONSTRATION PROJECT ACT OF
19 1995.
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 47, Subchapter 1 is
25 repealed.

26 ~~6-47-101. Title.~~

27 ~~This subchapter shall be known as and may be cited as the "Arkansas~~
28 ~~Distance Learning Demonstration Project Act of 1995".~~

29
30 ~~6-47-102. Purpose.~~

31 ~~The purpose of this subchapter is to serve as a legislative mandate for~~
32 ~~the establishment, organization, and administration of a demonstration~~
33 ~~project designed to improve course offerings available to high school~~
34 ~~students throughout the state. The project will demonstrate the efficiency of~~
35 ~~using distance learning to enhance education and prepare students for greater~~
36 ~~success in a postsecondary educational environment.~~



1
2 ~~6-47-103. Definitions.~~

3 ~~As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:~~

4 ~~(1) "Board" means the State Board of Education;~~

5 ~~(2) "Department" means the Department of Education;~~

6 ~~(3) "Director" means the Director of the Department of~~
7 ~~Education;~~

8 ~~(4) "Distance learning" means an interactive telecommunications~~
9 ~~system that utilizes information technology, audio, video, and similar~~
10 ~~technological elements, is compatible with other distance learning networks,~~
11 ~~and is used for the purpose of enhancing instructional opportunities in~~
12 ~~Arkansas public schools;~~

13 ~~(5) "Infrastructure" means an interlinked system of wires,~~
14 ~~cables, fiber optics, or other wireline or wireless communications media;~~

15 ~~(6) "OURNET" means the Ozark Unlimited Resources Educational~~
16 ~~Cooperative Network;~~

17 ~~(7) "Project" means the Arkansas Distance Learning Demonstration~~
18 ~~Project; and~~

19 ~~(8) "Public telecommunications" means the facilities used in~~
20 ~~providing telecommunication services to the public, including, but not~~
21 ~~limited to, facilities owned and operated by public utilities.~~

22
23 ~~6-47-104. Establishment and implementation.~~

24 ~~(a) There is hereby established the Arkansas Distance Learning~~
25 ~~Demonstration Project, which shall be conducted by OURNET and administered~~
26 ~~through the Director of the Department of Education.~~

27 ~~(b)(1) The funding necessary to carry out the provisions of this~~
28 ~~subchapter may be derived from donations, grants, or legislative~~
29 ~~appropriation.~~

30 ~~(2) The director may solicit and receive donations and grants~~
31 ~~for the purpose of administering the project.~~

32 ~~(3) All donations, grants, and appropriations received shall be~~
33 ~~accounted for by the Department of Education.~~

34 ~~(c) The director shall review the implementation of this project~~
35 ~~annually and make recommendations to the board regarding the number and~~
36 ~~amount of awards to ensure that the purpose of the project is realized.~~

~~6-47-105. Rules and regulations.~~

~~The board is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the implementation of this subchapter.~~

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 47, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

6-47-401. Title.

This subchapter shall be known as and may be cited as the "Arkansas Distance Learning Development Project Act of 2003".

6-47-402. Purpose.

(a)(1) The purpose of this subchapter is to provide for the establishment, organization, and administration of a distance learning program designed to improve course offerings available to students throughout the state.

(2) The program will demonstrate the efficiency of using distance learning to enhance elementary and secondary education and prepare students for greater success in a postsecondary educational environment.

6-47-403. Definitions.

As used in this subchapter:

(1) "Board" means the State Board of Education;

(2) "Department" means the Department of Education;

(3) "Director" means the Director of the Department of Education;

(4) "Distance learning" means an interactive telecommunications system that utilizes information technology, audio, video, and similar technological elements, is compatible with other distance learning networks, and is used for the purpose of enhancing instructional opportunities in Arkansas public schools;

(5) "Infrastructure" means an interlinked system of wires, cables, fiber optics, or other wireline or wireless communications media;

(6) "Program" means the Arkansas Distance Learning Development Project; and

1 (7) "Public telecommunications" means the facilities used in
 2 providing telecommunication services to the public, including, but not
 3 limited to, facilities owned and operated by public utilities.

4
 5 6-47-404. Establishment and implementation.

6 (a) There is established the Arkansas Distance Learning Development
 7 Project, which shall be conducted by the Department of Education and
 8 administered through the Director of the Department of Education.

9 (b) The project shall have four (4) focus areas:

10 (1) To help alleviate the increasing shortage of available
 11 qualified teachers;

12 (2) To provide additional course scheduling opportunities of
 13 students currently forced to choose between courses that are scheduled
 14 infrequently or currently;

15 (3) To provide an opportunity for students to access an enriched
 16 curriculum and additional courses beyond those mandated by the Standards for
 17 Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools; and

18 (4) To develop and make available online professional
 19 development and instructional resources for all teachers and administrators.

20 (c)(1)(A) The funding necessary to carry out the provisions of this
 21 subchapter may be derived from donations, grants, or legislative
 22 appropriation.

23 (B) The project shall receive from the Public School Fund
 24 an amount equal to one-sixth (1/6) of the previous year's base local revenue
 25 per student for each student enrolled in a course at the secondary level of
 26 for each subject at the elementary level.

27 (2) The director may solicit and receive donations and grants
 28 for the purpose of administering the program.

29 (3)(A) All donations, grants, and appropriations received shall
 30 be accounted for by the Department of Education.

31 (B) Fund balances may be carried over from one year to the
 32 next to continue the project.

33 (c) The director shall review the implementation of this program
 34 annually and make recommendations to the board regarding the number and
 35 amount of awards to ensure that the purpose of the program is achieved.

36 (d) The director may enter into contracts or provide grants to local

1 education agencies, education service cooperatives, or other entities for
2 personnel, facilities, and services necessary to implement this project.

3 (e) Students taking courses through this project shall be considered
4 entitled to any public education credits and grades assigned through this
5 project and those credits and grades shall be accepted by all public schools
6 in Arkansas.

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8 6-47-405. Rules and regulations.

9 The board shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary for the
10 implementation of this subchapter.

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