

1 State of Arkansas  
2 84th General Assembly  
3 Second Extraordinary Session, 2003  
4

Call Item 4

# A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1056

5 By: Representative C. Johnson  
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7

## For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION RENEWAL  
10 ZONES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.  
11

## Subtitle

13 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION  
14 RENEWAL ZONES.  
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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:  
18

19 SECTION 1. Creation of the Office of Education Renewal Zones.

20 (a) There is created an Office of Education Renewal Zones.

21 (b) The office shall be under the supervision of the State Board of  
22 Education.

23 (c) The Chairman of the State Board of Education shall name a three  
24 (3) member Public School Education Renewal Zones Oversight Panel consisting  
25 of the following individuals:

26 (1) Chairman of the state board; and

27 (2) Two (2) members of the state board.

28 (d)(1) The panel shall select an individual to serve as the Director  
29 of the Office of Education Renewal Zones.

30 (2) The Director of the Office of Education Renewal Zones with  
31 guidance and approval from the panel, shall be responsible for hiring all  
32 employees of the office.

33 (3) The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education  
34 shall assign one (1) individual from the staff of the Department of Higher  
35 Education to serve as a liaison to the office.

36 (e) The office shall be responsible for developing guidelines for the



1 approval of education renewal zone strategic plans and guidelines for the  
 2 evaluation and reporting of education renewal zone activities.

3 (f) The office shall approve any education renewal zone strategic plan  
 4 prior to the disbursement or annual renewal of funds to participating  
 5 institutions of higher education.

6 (g)(1) Effective July 1, 2004, any public school, education service  
 7 cooperative and institution of higher education is authorized to enter into  
 8 one (1) or more inter-local agreements through which they collaborate to  
 9 improve public school performance and academic achievement.

10 (2) Each inter-local agreement shall establish an education  
 11 renewal zone.

12 (3) The purpose of an education renewal zone shall be to:

13 (A) Identify and implement education and management  
 14 strategies designed specifically to improve public school performance and  
 15 student academic achievement throughout the State of Arkansas, with special  
 16 focus on the state's most academically distressed public schools;

17 (B) Provide for collaboration among the state's smaller  
 18 schools and districts in order to achieve some of the advantages of economies  
 19 of scale in providing educational and related activities;

20 (C) Maximize benefits and outcomes of public schooling by  
 21 concentrating and coordinating the resources of Arkansas' higher education  
 22 institutions, the expertise of the regional education service cooperatives,  
 23 and the technical assistance of other service providers to improve public  
 24 school performance and student academic achievement; and

25 (D) Enable small, rural and low-wealth schools to make the  
 26 best use of the latest cost-effective distance learning technology to enhance  
 27 curricula and professional development through two-way interactive learning  
 28 environments.

29 (h) Each education renewal zone shall consist of the following:

30 (1) Higher education partner;

31 (A) The office shall develop, publish and disseminate  
 32 guidelines for establishing an education renewal zone, including a process  
 33 for selecting a qualified higher education partner in the fifteen (15)  
 34 education service cooperative areas in the state and in Pulaski County.

35 (B)(i) A qualified higher education partner shall:

36 (a) Be a school with a department of education

1 or a comprehensive four-year teacher preparation program; and

2 (b) Be capable of demonstrating a willingness  
 3 and flexibility to restructure its programs and services to meet the needs of  
 4 the participating grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12) schools and  
 5 school districts.

6 (ii) The office shall give preference to qualified  
 7 four-year higher education institutions located within the education service  
 8 cooperative area.

9 (C) If there is no qualified four-year higher education  
 10 institution located within the education service cooperative area, the office  
 11 may select:

12 (i) A two-year higher education institution that in  
 13 collaboration with a qualified four-year educational institution located in  
 14 another education service cooperative area provides a comprehensive four-year  
 15 teacher preparation program; or

16 (ii) A qualified higher education institution  
 17 located in another education service cooperative area.

18 (iii) An institution of higher education may serve  
 19 as the higher education partner for more than one educational service  
 20 cooperative area;

21 (2)(A) Education Service Cooperative.

22 (B) The education service cooperative shall be a full  
 23 partner in planning, implementing, and evaluating the education renewal zone  
 24 in its respective service area and shall provide direct services as called  
 25 for in the education renewal zone plan;

26 (3) Public Schools.

27 (A) Public schools may participate in an education renewal  
 28 zone upon successful application by the public school district of which the  
 29 school is a part.

30 (B) The application for admission to the education renewal  
 31 zone shall be submitted to the office at a time and in a manner as prescribed  
 32 via rule or standard by the office.

33 (i) Acceptance or rejection of the application by a  
 34 school for admittance to an education renewal zone shall be the  
 35 responsibility of the office, with consultation from the higher education  
 36 partner.

1                   (ii) The office may include within an education  
 2 renewal zone any school within the education service cooperative area  
 3 provided that no more than ten (10) schools may participate in any single  
 4 education renewal zone.

5                   (iii) The office may designate up to a maximum of  
 6 three (3) education renewal zones within any single education service  
 7 cooperative area.

8                   (C) In designating education renewal zones and selecting  
 9 schools for participation in a particular zone, the office shall give  
 10 priority to schools that meet one or more of the following criteria:

11                   (i) The school is classified as a school in school  
 12 improvement or alert status for school improvement under the Arkansas state  
 13 compliance plan under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20  
 14 U.S.C.S. § 6301 et seq.

15                   (ii) The school lies within a school district  
 16 designated by the Department of Education as in academic distress or  
 17 financial distress under the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and  
 18 Accountability Program.

19                   (iii) The school demonstrates an inability to hire  
 20 and retain highly qualified teachers as defined by the state plan for  
 21 compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C.S. §  
 22 6301 et seq.

23                   (iv) The school demonstrates an inability to provide  
 24 the minimum number of course offerings as determined by the state through the  
 25 conventional hiring of qualified teachers.

26                   (v) The school is within a school district with an  
 27 average daily membership of fewer than one thousand five hundred (1,500)  
 28 students.

29                   (vi) The school serves a student population that  
 30 exceeds the statewide average rate of participation in free or reduced price  
 31 lunch programs.

32                   (4) Local Advisory Group.

33                   (A) Each education renewal zone shall form a local  
 34 advisory group comprised of a representative of the following groups:

35                   (i) The higher education partner

36                   (ii) The education service cooperative which

1 includes the area in which the education renewal zone is located;

2 (iii) The public school or school district  
 3 participating in the education renewal zone; and

4 (iv) Each community in which there is a school  
 5 participating in the education renewal zone.

6 (B) The office may designate up to a maximum of three (3)  
 7 education renewal zones within any single education service cooperative area.

8 (5) Technical Assistance Provider. Any two-year community or  
 9 technical college, technical support organization, or other entity may  
 10 participate in the education renewal zone at the discretion of the office and  
 11 in collaboration with a designated higher education partner and a designated  
 12 education service cooperative.

13 (i) The office, the state board and the local school districts shall  
 14 exercise due diligence to assure that all schools classified as a school in  
 15 school improvement under the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20  
 16 U.S.C.S. § 6301 et seq., as in existence on December 1, 2003 are included in  
 17 a designated education renewal zone.

18 (j) The office may, at its discretion, include any school regardless  
 19 of its eligibility under the criteria in subdivisions (h)(3)(C)(i) through  
 20 (vi) of this section, if it determines that on the basis of location,  
 21 characteristics of its faculty or leadership, needs of the students, or other  
 22 factors, that the inclusion of such school significantly strengthens the  
 23 prospect of the education renewal zone in meeting its school improvement  
 24 goals.

25 (k) The office may, at its discretion, change participating schools  
 26 within each education renewal zone.

27 (1)(1) Each school participating in an education renewal zone shall  
 28 develop and implement a school improvement plan.

29 (2) Each school improvement plan shall at a minimum include the  
 30 following:

31 (A) Goals for improving student achievement;

32 (B) Measurable benchmarks for achieving student  
 33 improvement goals;

34 (C) A timeline for reaching goals in improving student  
 35 achievement; and

36 (D) Requirements for services to be provided by the

1 Education Renewal Zone Partners.

2 (m) The partners within a specific education renewal zone shall  
 3 develop a strategic plan that is responsive to the needs of the individual  
 4 school improvement plans.

5 (n) The education renewal zone strategic plan shall at a minimum  
 6 provide for the following:

7 (A) Collaboration between and among the higher education  
 8 institution partners, education service cooperatives, schools and communities  
 9 participating in the education renewal zone, including within the academic  
 10 departments within the higher education institution partners;

11 (B) A comprehensive program of professional development to  
 12 assure the practical knowledge base of pre-service and in-service teachers  
 13 with respect to pedagogical practice, content knowledge, and competent use of  
 14 distance learning technology;

15 (C) Enhancement and expansion of local school curricula  
 16 offerings through the use of two-way interactive television to include  
 17 advanced placement, dual-credit and advanced high school courses;

18 (D) The sharing of faculty for core course offerings when  
 19 schools are unable to hire highly-qualified teachers in core subject areas  
 20 required for college entrance or teachers necessary to meet state  
 21 accreditation standards;

22 (E) A strategy to recruit and retain highly-qualified  
 23 teachers with particular focus on hard-to-staff schools;

24 (F) A system for mentoring teachers with three (3) or  
 25 fewer years of professional service;

26 (G) Active participation of the community in the work of  
 27 the school;

28 (H) Active involvement of parents in the academic work of  
 29 the student; and

30 (I) A means of collecting the data necessary to evaluate  
 31 the progress of each participating public school and the education renewal  
 32 zone in its entirety.

33 (o) Each education renewal zone, using guidelines and indicators set  
 34 by the office, shall prepare an annual report to the office describing the  
 35 progress toward accomplishing the goals of the education renewal zone.

36 (p) The office, under guidance and direction of the Public School

1 Education Renewal Zones Oversight Panel, shall prepare an annual report to  
 2 the Governor, the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education  
 3 describing the progress toward accomplishing the goals of the individual  
 4 education renewal zones and the overall education renewal zone program.

5 (q) The office shall establish a website, accessible by the public, to  
 6 provide for broad dissemination of both the education renewal zone plans and  
 7 strategies and the results of the annual reports on progress toward  
 8 accomplishing the goals of the individual education renewal zones and the  
 9 overall education renewal zone program.

10  
 11 SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the  
 12 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that the Arkansas Supreme Court in  
 13 Lake View School District No. 25 v. Huckabee, 351 Ark. 31 (2002) declared the  
 14 current system of education to be unconstitutional because it is both  
 15 inequitable and inadequate; and the Arkansas Supreme Court set forth the test  
 16 for a constitutional system to be one in which the state has an “absolute  
 17 duty” to provide an “equal opportunity to an adequate education”; the  
 18 Arkansas Supreme Court instructed the General Assembly to undertake actions  
 19 as necessary to provide an opportunity for an adequate and equitable  
 20 education for the children of Arkansas; and the provisions of this bill are  
 21 necessary steps toward accomplishing that goal. Therefore, an emergency is  
 22 declared to exist and this act being immediately necessary for the  
 23 preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective  
 24 on:

25 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

26 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,  
 27 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the  
 28 bill; or

29 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is  
 30 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.