

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

As Engrossed: H12/19/03
A Bill

Call Item 4

HOUSE BILL 1056

5 By: Representatives C. Johnson, *Chesterfield, Clemons, Dobbins, Eason, Elliott, Green, Jones, Thomas,*
6 *White*
7 By: *Senators Wilkins, Steele*
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10 **For An Act To Be Entitled**

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

13
14 **Subtitle**

15 AN ACT TO CREATE THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION
16 RENEWAL ZONES.

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

20
21 SECTION 1. Creation of the Office of Education Renewal Zones.

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

23 (b) The office shall be under the supervision of the State Board of
24 Education.

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

28 (1) Chairman of the state board; and

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

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

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

35 (3) The Director of the Arkansas Department of Higher Education
36 shall assign one (1) individual from the staff of the Department of Higher



1 Education to serve as a liaison to the office.

2 (e) The office shall be responsible for developing guidelines for the
3 approval of education renewal zone strategic plans and guidelines for the
4 evaluation and reporting of education renewal zone activities.

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

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

12 (2) Each inter-local agreement shall establish an education
13 renewal zone.

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

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

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

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

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

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

32 (1) Higher education partner;

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

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

2 (a) Be a school with a department of education
3 or a comprehensive four-year teacher preparation program; and

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

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

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

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

18 (ii) A qualified higher education institution
19 located in another education service cooperative area.

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

23 (2)(A) Education Service Cooperative.

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

28 (3) Public Schools.

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

32 (ii) Public schools designated by the Department of
33 Education as a school in school improvement or a school in a school district
34 designated by the department as being in academic distress shall participate
35 in an education renewal zone and the office shall establish education renewal
36 zones for those schools.

1 (i) Acceptance or rejection of the application by a
2 school for admittance to an education renewal zone shall be the
3 responsibility of the office, with consultation from the higher education
4 partner.

5 (ii) The office may include within an education
6 renewal zone any school within the education service cooperative area
7 provided that no more than ten (10) schools may participate in any single
8 education renewal zone.

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

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

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

19 (ii) The school lies within a school district
20 designated by the Department of Education as in academic distress or
21 financial distress under the Arkansas Comprehensive Testing, Assessment, and
22 Accountability Program.

23 (iii) The school demonstrates an inability to hire
24 and retain highly qualified teachers as defined by the state plan for
25 compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C.S. §
26 6301 et seq.

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

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

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

36 (4) Local Advisory Group.

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

3 (i) The higher education partner

4 (ii) The education service cooperative which
5 includes the area in which the education renewal zone is located;

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

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

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

12 (C) The membership and staff of local advisory groups
13 shall be reflective of the diversity of the population being served by the
14 education renewal zone.

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

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

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

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

34 (1)(1) Each school participating in an education renewal zone shall
35 develop and implement a school improvement plan.

36 (2) Each school improvement plan shall at a minimum include the

1 following:

2 (A) Goals for improving student achievement;

3 (B) Measurable benchmarks for achieving student
4 improvement goals;

5 (C) A timeline for reaching goals in improving student
6 achievement; and

7 (D) Requirements for services to be provided by the
8 Education Renewal Zone Partners.

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

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

14 (A) Collaboration between and among the higher education
15 institution partners, education service cooperatives, schools and communities
16 participating in the education renewal zone, including within the academic
17 departments within the higher education institution partners;

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

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

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

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

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

33 (G) Active participation of the community in the work of
34 the school;

35 (H) Active involvement of parents in the academic work of
36 the student; and

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

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

7 (p) The office, under guidance and direction of the Public School
8 Education Renewal Zones Oversight Panel, shall prepare an annual report to
9 the Governor, the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education
10 describing the progress toward accomplishing the goals of the individual
11 education renewal zones and the overall education renewal zone program.

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

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

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

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

36 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is

1 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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/s/ C. Johnson, et al

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