

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
4

As Engrossed: H2/28/03

A Bill

Act 603 of 2003
HOUSE BILL 1387

5 By: Representatives C. Johnson, White, *Chesterfield, Green, Goss, Penix, Clemons, Wood*
6 By: *Senators Wilkins, Brown*
7
8

For An Act To Be Entitled

10 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO CREATE A
11 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLAN; AND FOR OTHER
12 PURPOSES.
13

Subtitle

15 AN ACT TO REQUIRE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO
16 CREATE A PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT PLAN.
17
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
20

21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, is amended to add an
22 additional subchapter to read as follows:

23 6-15-1601. Findings.

24 (a) The General Assembly recognizes:

25 (1) That a child's education is a responsibility shared by the
26 school and family during the entire time the child spends in school;

27 (2) To support the goal of the schools to educate all students
28 effectively, the schools and parents must work as knowledgeable partners;

29 (3) That although parents are diverse in culture, language, and
30 needs, they are an integral component of a school's ability to provide for
31 the educational success of their children;

32 (4) That engaging parents is essential to improve student
33 achievement; and

34 (5) That schools should foster and support active parental
35 involvement.
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1 6-15-1602. Parental involvement plan.

2 (a) By September 1, 2003, each public school district and each public
3 school within its boundaries, in collaboration with parents, shall establish
4 a parental involvement plan including programs and practices that enhance
5 parental involvement and reflect the specific needs of students and their
6 families.

7 (b) The parental involvement program in each school shall:

8 (1) Involve parents of students at all grade levels in a variety
9 of roles;

10 (2) Be comprehensive and coordinated in nature;

11 (3)(A) Recognize that communication between home and school
12 should be regular, two-way, and meaningful.

13 (B) To encourage communication with parents the school
14 shall prepare family kits, appropriate for the age and grade of the child,
15 describing:

16 (i) The school's parental involvement program;

17 (ii) The recommended role of the parent, student,
18 teacher, and school;

19 (iii) Ways for the parents to become involved in the
20 school and his or her child's education;

21 (iv) Activities planed throughout the school year to
22 encourage parental involvement;

23 (v) A system to allow the parents and teachers to
24 communicate in a regular, two-way, and meaningful manner with the child's
25 teacher and the school principal.

26 (C) To encourage communication with parents, the school
27 shall schedule no less than two (2) parent-teacher conferences per school
28 year.

29 (D) The school may plan and engage in other activities
30 determined by the school to be beneficial to encourage communication with
31 parents;

32 (4)(A) Promote and support responsible parenting.

33 (B) To promote and support responsible parenting, the
34 school shall:

35 (i) Purchase parenting books, magazines and other
36 informative material regarding responsible parenting through the school

1 library, advertise the current selection, and give parents an opportunity to
2 borrow the materials for review;

3 (ii) Publish a notice in the local newspaper at the
4 end of each school year honoring parents who attend all parent-teacher
5 conferences scheduled by the school;

6 (iii) Create parent centers; and

7 (iv) Plan and engage in other activities determined
8 by the school to be beneficial to promoting and supporting responsible
9 parenting;

10 (5)(A) Acknowledge that parents play an integral role in
11 assisting student learning.

12 (B) To help parents in assisting students, the school
13 shall:

14 (i) Schedule regular "Parents Make the Difference"
15 evenings where parents are given a report on the state of the school and an
16 overview of:

17 (a) What students will be learning;

18 (b) How students will be assessed;

19 (c) What parents should expect for the their
20 child's education; and

21 (d) How parents can assist and make a
22 difference in his or her child's education; and

23 (ii) Engage in other activities determined by the
24 school to help parents assist in his or her child's learning;

25 (6)(A) Welcome parents in the school and seek parental support
26 and assistance.

27 (B) To welcome parents in the school, the school shall:

28 (i) Not have any school policies or procedures that
29 would discourage a parent from visiting the school, specifically including:

30 (a) Policies requiring parents to pick-up his
31 or her child outside the school building each day; and

32 (b) Policies prohibiting the parents from
33 visiting a child's classrooms during school events;

34 (ii) Publish a volunteer resource book, listing the
35 interests and availability of volunteers for school staff members' use,
36 specifically including:

1 (a) Survey parents regarding their interests,
2 so volunteer work will be meaningful;

3 (b) Determine how frequently a volunteer would
4 like to participate, including the option of just one (1) time per year;

5 (c) Include options for those who are
6 available to help at home;

7 (d) Use the resource book to help match school
8 needs with volunteer interests;

9 (iii) Print statements attesting to the school
10 district's commitment to parental involvement and distribute the statements
11 to parents of student; and

12 (iv) Engage in other activities determined by the
13 school to welcome parents in the school;

14 (7)(A) Recognize that a parent is a full partner in the
15 decisions that affect his or her child and family.

16 (B) To encourage parents to participate as full partners
17 in the decisions that affect his or her child and family, the school shall:

18 (i) Frequently publish the school's process for
19 resolving parental concerns, including how to define the problem, whom to
20 approach first, and how to develop solutions;

21 (ii) Sponsor seminars to inform the parents of high
22 school students about how to be involved in the decisions affecting course
23 selection, career planning, and preparation for post-secondary opportunities;
24 and

25 (iii) Engage in other activities that the school
26 determines will encourage parents to participate as full partners in the
27 decisions that affect his or her child and family;

28 (8)(A) Recognize that community resources strengthen school
29 programs, family practices, and student learning;

30 (B) To take advantage of community resources the school
31 shall:

32 (i) Contact alumni from the school to create an
33 alumni advisory commission to provide advice and guidance for school
34 improvement;

35 (ii) Develop paycheck size cards with tips for how
36 parents can foster their child's success and contact employers about

1 including the cards with employee paychecks; and

2 (iii) Engage in other activities that the school
3 determines will use community resources to strengthen school programs, family
4 practices, and student learning; and

5 (9) Support the development, implementation, and regular
6 evaluation of the program to involve parents in the decisions and practices
7 of the school district, using to the degree possible, the components listed
8 in this section.

9 (c)(1) The principal of each school in a district shall designate one
10 (1) certified staff member that is willing to serve as a parent facilitator
11 to organize meaningful training for staff and parents promoting and
12 encouraging a welcoming atmosphere to parental involvement in the school and
13 to undertake efforts to ensure that parental participation is recognized as
14 an asset to the school.

15 (2) The certified staff serving as a parental facilitator shall
16 receive supplement pay for the assigned duties as required by law.

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18 6-15-1603. Staff Development.

19 (a) By September 1, 2003, the State Board of Education's Standards of
20 Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools shall require no less than two (2)
21 hours of professional development opportunities for teachers, which may be
22 included in the thirty (30) hours of professional development required as of
23 January 1, 2003, designed to enhance understanding of effective parental
24 involvement strategies.

25 (b) By September 1, 2003, the State Board of Education's Standards of
26 Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools shall require no less than three (3)
27 hours of professional development opportunities for administrators, in
28 addition to the thirty (30) hours of professional development required as of
29 January 1, 2003, designed to enhance understanding of:

30 (i) Effective parent involvement strategies; and

31 (ii) The importance of administrative leadership in
32 setting expectations and creating a climate conducive to parental
33 participation.

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35 SECTION 2. (a) Beginning on October 1, 2004 and by each October 1
36 thereafter, every school district shall review and update the district's

1 parental involvement plan and file a copy of the district's parental
2 involvement plan with the Department of Education.

3 (b)(1) The Department of Education shall review each parental
4 involvement plan and determine if the plan is in compliance with provisions
5 of this act and shall indicate on the school's performance report under § 6-
6 15-1402 if the district is in compliance, or if the district is not in
7 compliance, with this act.

8 (2) If the Department of Education determines that a school
9 district is not in compliance with section 1 of this act, the department
10 shall send the district written notification indicating any deficiencies in
11 the district's plan no later than January 1 of each year and allow the
12 district an opportunity to correct any deficiency.

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14 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1402(b)(2)(B), concerning school
15 performance reports, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as
16 follows:

17 (iii) The school district has adopted a parental involvement plan in
18 compliance with § 6-15-1602.

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20 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-15-1402(b)(3)(B), concerning school
21 performance reports, is amended to add an additional subdivision to read as
22 follows:

23 (iii) The school district has adopted a parental involvement plan in
24 compliance with § 6-15-1602.

25 SECTION 5. The Department of Education and the Department of Higher
26 Education shall collaborate with institutions of higher education to
27 incorporate into teacher education programs information regarding the
28 importance of parental involvement and how to successfully encourage parents
29 to be partners in their child's education.

30 /s/ C. Johnson, et al
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33 APPROVED: 3/24/2003
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