

Act 619 of the 1989 Regular Session.

Act 619

HB1757

By: Representative Givens

"AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND SCHOOL SAFETY."

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

SECTION 1. Legislative Intent and Purpose. The General Assembly hereby finds that the students and staffs of our schools deserve to work in an atmosphere that is safe, secure, and productive; and that the problems of crime, violence, drug trafficking, truancy, vandalism and discipline too often interfere with the safe and orderly process of learning in our schools. The absence of student discipline and a safe learning environment undermine the recent improvements the people of Arkansas have made in their education system. The General Assembly therefore finds that it is in the best interest of the state to insure that students and staffs in our schools are provided with an environment that facilitates and is consistent with the educational purposes of the school.

SECTION 2. There is hereby established the Governor's Task Force on Student Discipline and School Safety. The responsibilities of the Task Force shall include, but not be limited to, studying the problems of crime, violence, drug use, weapon possession, truancy, vandalism, disproportionate suspension and expulsion rates of minority students, disproportionate application of disciplinary actions by gender, and a general absence of discipline on the part of some students in the public schools of Arkansas and making recommendations to the State Board of Education and to the Arkansas General Assembly regarding policies and legislation for addressing these serious problems. The Task Force's recommendations shall include a proposed model student discipline policy which reflects the procedural rights of handicapped students and which does not result in disproportionate suspensions or expulsions of minority students and school safety code designed to insure that

students and public school teachers, administrators and staff have a safe environment in which to work as a safe school environment is an essential component of educational excellence.

The Department of Education shall provide staff assistance to the Task Force and may expend funds appropriated to the Department to defray expenses related to the work of the Task Force.

SECTION 3. The Task Force shall consist of eighteen members to be appointed by the Governor. The appointments to the Task Force shall be made by May 1, 1989. The membership of the Task Force shall be: one (1) member of the Arkansas House of Representatives recommended by the Speaker of the House; one (1) member of the Arkansas Senate recommended by the President Pro Tem; a representative of the Arkansas Education Association; a representative of the Arkansas Association of School Administrators; a representative of the Arkansas School Boards Association; a representative of the Arkansas School Counselor Association; a representative of the Arkansas Congress of Parents and Teachers Association; a student who is enrolled in a public secondary school in Arkansas; a representative of the law enforcement community; a

juvenile court judge; the director of the General Education Division, Arkansas Department of Education, or her designee and two (2) representatives of the general public. The Governor shall designate the chairman of the Task Force.

SECTION 4. The chairman shall convene the first meeting of the Task Force by July 15, 1989. The Task Force shall make its report to the General Assembly and the Arkansas Department of Education by November 1, 1990.

SECTION 5. All provisions of this act of a general and permanent nature are amendatory to the Arkansas Code of 1987 Annotated and the Arkansas Code Revision Commission shall incorporate the same in the Code.

SECTION 6. EMERGENCY. It is hereby found and determined by the General Assembly that public education in the state of Arkansas is confronted by the serious problems of crime, violence, use of drugs, truancy, vandalism, and a general lack of discipline on the part of some students and that the establishment of the Governor's Task Force on Student Discipline and School Safety to study these serious problems and to make recommendations to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly is essential to the efficient operation of the public schools of this state. Therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist and this Act being necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval.

APPROVED: March 16, 1989

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