

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.

Act 1306 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas
2 87th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2009

As Engrossed: H3/12/09

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1956

4
5 By: Representative Word

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PROJECT GRADUATION
10 COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

13 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PROJECT
14 GRADUATION COMMISSION.

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

19 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 1, is amended to add an
20 additional subchapter to read as follows:*

21 *SUBCHAPTER 4 - THE ARKANSAS PROJECT GRADUATION COMMISSION*

22 *6-1-401. Findings.*

23 *The General Assembly finds that:*

24 *(1) Graduation rates are an:*

25 *(A) Important economic indicator for the state's economy;*

26 *and*

27 *(B) Essential indicator of school performance for parents,
28 policy makers, and other concerned community members;*

29 *(2) Arkansans who fail to earn a high school diploma or
30 postsecondary degree are:*

31 *(A) At a great disadvantage when it comes to obtaining:*

32 *(i) High paying jobs; and*

33 *(ii) Health care; and*

34 *(B) More likely to:*

35 *(i) Become parents at a young age; and*



1 (ii) Be involved in the criminal justice system; and
2 (3) Low graduation rates adversely affect the economic
3 opportunities of the state and decrease the state's competitive edge.

4 6-1-402. Purpose.

5 The purpose of the Arkansas Project Graduation Commission is to:

6 (1) Investigate high school dropout prevention strategies;
7 (2) Analyze the relationship between high school graduation
8 rates and the state's economy; and

9 (3) Recommend strategies that will increase the overall high
10 school graduation rate of Arkansas students by helping parents, schools, and
11 students identify academic warning signs of dropout.

12 6-1-403. Arkansas Project Graduation Commission.

13 (a) There is created the "Arkansas Project Graduation Commission".

14 (b) The commission is composed of the following members:

15 (1) Three (3) members appointed by the Governor, one (1) of whom
16 shall act as the chair of the commission;

17 (2) Three (3) members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
18 Representatives;

19 (3) Three (3) members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of
20 the Senate;

21 (4) The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee;

22 (5) The Director of the Department of Higher Education or his or
23 her designee; and

24 (6) The Director of the Department of Workforce Education or his
25 or her designee.

26 (c) Each member of the commission shall be a resident of the State of
27 Arkansas throughout his or her term.

28 (d) The appointed members of the commission shall serve staggered
29 terms of three (3) years to be decided by a random draw at the first meeting
30 of the commission, with:

31 (1) Four (4) members serving terms of three (3) years;

32 (2) Four (4) members serving terms of two (2) years; and

33 (3) Four (4) members serving a term of one (1) year.

34 (e) If a vacancy occurs in an appointed position, the vacancy shall be
35 filled for the unexpired term by an appointment made in the same manner as
36 the original appointment.

6-1-404. Organization and operation.

(a) The Arkansas Project Graduation Commission shall elect annually a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary.

(b) The commission shall meet one (1) time each month, rotating meeting locations between the:

(1) Department of Education;

(2) Department of Higher Education; and

(3) Department of Workforce Education.

(c) A majority of the commission members constitute a quorum for conducting business.

(d) The Department of Education shall provide staff support for the commission.

(e)(1) The members of the commission may receive an expense reimbursement for attendance at each monthly meeting in accordance with § 25-16-902.

(2) The expense reimbursement shall be paid by the Department of Education from funds available for that purpose.

6-1-405. Report.

(a) The Arkansas Project Graduation Commission shall report by November 1, 2009, and each year thereafter, to the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education.

(b) The report shall contain, without limitation:

(1) Information on:

(A) High school graduation rates in the state; and

(B) Postsecondary graduation rates in the state;

(2) Effective strategies for increasing the:

(A) High school graduation rate; and

(B) Postsecondary degree completion rate; and

(3) The impact high school graduation rates and postsecondary degree completion rates have on the state's economy.

/s/ Word

APPROVED: 4/9/2009