

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 829 of the Regular Session

1 State of Arkansas
2 86th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2007
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 2515

5 By: Representative Bond
6
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOOL ACCREDITATION REGULATIONS
10 CONCERNING UNITARY STATUS; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.
12

Subtitle

14 AN ACT PROVIDING SCHOOL ACCREDITATION
15 REGULATIONS CONCERNING UNITARY STATUS.
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18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
19

SECTION 1. Findings.

21 It is found and determined by the General Assembly that:

22 (1) The school districts in Pulaski County entered into a
23 settlement agreement and desegregation plans in 1989 with the intent to
24 fulfill a "promise for achieving unitary school systems which are free from
25 the vestiges of racial discrimination";

26 (2) The State of Arkansas has paid the districts in excess of
27 approximately seven hundred million dollars (\$700,000,000) to assist the
28 districts in fulfilling their promise to achieve unitary schools free from
29 the vestiges of racial discrimination;

30 (3) The Little Rock School District has recently been declared
31 unitary and has been released from federal court supervision, but the Pulaski
32 County Special School District and the North Little Rock School District have
33 yet to attain a ruling that they have fulfilled their promise to their
34 students to achieve unitary school systems;

35 (4) These school districts believe they are unitary or have



1 achieved a unitary status in some respect, and have stated so publicly in
2 legislative committee meetings;

3 (5) The General Assembly finds that without any ruling from the
4 federal district court that the districts have achieved unitary status, there
5 is no assurance that the promise of schools free of the vestiges of racial
6 discrimination has been fulfilled by these districts;

7 (6) The General Assembly finds that, as a part of the state's
8 overall obligation to provide a general, suitable, and efficient school
9 system, the students and parents of the Pulaski County districts deserve to
10 know that they are being educated in a unitary school district, or if their
11 district is not unitary in some respect the district should be making
12 adequate progress towards being declared fully unitary;

13 (7) The General Assembly seeks to assist the school districts to
14 achieve unitary status and to fulfill their promise to provide school systems
15 which are free from the vestiges of racial discrimination consistent with
16 their desegregation plans; and

17 (8) The General Assembly also seeks to provide some assurance to
18 the children in the districts that the promise of unitary schools in the
19 Pulaski County districts will be fulfilled within a reasonable amount of
20 time.

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22 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-202(a), concerning school accreditation
23 regulations, is amended to read as follows:

24 (a)(1) The State Board of Education is authorized and directed to
25 develop comprehensive regulations, criteria, and standards to be used by the
26 board and the Department of Education in the accreditation of school programs
27 in elementary and secondary public schools in this state.

28 (2) In its regulations, criteria, and standards promulgated
29 under this subchapter, the State Board of Education shall include a provision
30 regarding the attainment of unitary status for school districts that have not
31 been released from court supervision over desegregation obligations.

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33 APPROVED: 4/2/2007
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