

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
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4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 77

5 By: Senator L. Eads
6 By: Representative C. Fite
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
10 CONCERNING EDUCATION RENEWAL ZONES; AND FOR OTHER
11 PURPOSES.
12
13

Subtitle

14 TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
15 CONCERNING EDUCATION RENEWAL ZONES.
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19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2501 is amended to read as follows:

22 6-15-2501. ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ Office of Education
23 Renewal Zones – Creation.

24 (a) There is created the ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ Office of
25 Education Renewal Zones.

26 (b) The ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ office shall be under the
27 supervision of the ~~State Board of Education~~ Division of Elementary and
28 Secondary Education.

29 (c)(1) The ~~state board~~ Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
30 shall select an individual to serve as the ~~Director of the Division of~~
31 ~~Education Renewal Zones~~ Director of the Office of Education Renewal Zones.

32 (2) With guidance and approval from the ~~state board~~ Division of
33 Elementary and Secondary Education, the ~~Director of the Division of Education~~
34 ~~Renewal Zones~~ Director of the Office of Education Renewal Zones shall be
35 responsible for hiring all employees of the ~~Division of Education Renewal~~
36 ~~Zones~~ office.



1 (3) The Director of the Division of Higher Education shall
2 assign one (1) individual from the staff of the Division of Higher Education
3 to serve as a liaison to the ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ office.

4 (d) The ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ office shall be
5 responsible for developing guidelines for the approval of education renewal
6 zone strategic plans and for the ~~evaluation and reporting~~ evaluation,
7 reporting, and coordination of education renewal zone activities.

8 (e) The ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ office shall approve ~~any~~
9 all ~~education renewal zone~~ strategic plan ~~plans developed by the education~~
10 renewal zones before the disbursement or annual renewal of funds to
11 participating institutions of higher education.

12
13 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2502(c) and (d), concerning the
14 establishment, purpose, and organization of education renewal zones, are
15 amended to read as follows:

16 (c) The purpose of an education renewal zone shall ~~be to~~ include:

17 (1) ~~Identify and implement~~ Identifying and implementing
18 education and management strategies designed specifically to improve public
19 school performance and student academic achievement throughout the State of
20 Arkansas, with special focus on the public schools in need of the specialized
21 support and services provided by education renewal zones;

22 (2) ~~Provide~~ Providing for collaboration among the state's
23 smaller schools and school districts in order to achieve some of the
24 advantages of economies of scale in providing educational and related
25 activities;

26 (3) ~~Maximize~~ Maximizing benefits and outcomes of public
27 schooling by ~~concentrating and coordinating the~~ available resources ~~of~~
28 ~~Arkansas's higher education institutions, the expertise of the regional~~
29 ~~education service cooperatives, and the technical assistance of other service~~
30 ~~providers~~ to improve public school performance and student academic
31 achievement through a collaborative, statewide effort; and

32 (4) ~~Enable~~ Enabling ~~small, rural, and low wealth~~ schools to make
33 the best use of the latest cost-effective distance learning technology to
34 enhance curricula and professional development opportunities ~~through two-way~~
35 ~~interactive learning environments~~.

36 (d) Each education renewal zone shall consist of the following:

1 (1)(A) A higher education partner.

2 (B) ~~The Division of Education Renewal Zones Office of~~
 3 Education Renewal Zones shall develop, publish, and disseminate guidelines
 4 for establishing an education renewal zone, including a process for selecting
 5 a qualified higher education partner in the education service cooperative
 6 areas in the state and in Pulaski County.

7 (C)(i) A qualified higher education partner shall:

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

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

14 (ii) ~~The Division of Education Renewal Zones office~~
 15 shall give preference to qualified four-year higher education institutions
 16 located within the education service cooperative area.

17 (D) If there is no qualified four-year higher education
 18 institution located within the education service cooperative area, the
 19 ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones office~~ may select:

20 (i) A two-year higher education institution that in
 21 collaboration with a qualified four-year education institution located in
 22 another education service cooperative area provides a comprehensive four-year
 23 teacher preparation program; or

24 (ii) A qualified higher education institution
 25 located in another education service cooperative area.

26 (E) An institution of higher education may serve as the
 27 higher education partner for more than one (1) ~~educational~~ education service
 28 cooperative area;

29 (2)(A) An education service cooperative.

30 (B) ~~The education service cooperative shall be a full~~
 31 ~~partner in planning, implementing, and evaluating the education renewal zone~~
 32 ~~in its respective service area and shall provide direct services as called~~
 33 ~~for in the education renewal zone plan~~ The education service cooperative
 34 shall be a partner to support schools in student achievement and school
 35 improvement;

36 (3)(A) Public schools.

1 ~~(B)(i) Public schools may participate in an education~~
 2 ~~renewal zone upon successful application by the public school district of~~
 3 ~~which the school is a part.~~

4 ~~(ii)(B)(i) A public school district classified~~
 5 ~~identified by the State Board of Education Division of Elementary and~~
 6 ~~Secondary Education as being in need of Level 5—Intensive the specialized~~
 7 ~~support and services provided by education renewal zones shall participate in~~
 8 ~~an education renewal zone if requested to do so by the Division of Elementary~~
 9 ~~and Secondary Education, and the division.~~

10 ~~(ii) The Division of Education Renewal Zones office~~
 11 ~~working with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall~~
 12 ~~establish priorities of establishing education renewal zones for those~~
 13 ~~schools provide a priority for education renewal zone participation the~~
 14 ~~schools described in subdivision (d)(3)(B)(i) of this section, which shall be~~
 15 ~~contingent on the appropriation availability of funding for the renewal~~
 16 ~~education zones.~~

17 ~~(iii) Acceptance or rejection of the application by~~
 18 ~~a school for admittance to an education renewal zone shall be the~~
 19 ~~responsibility of the Division of Education Renewal Zones, with consultation~~
 20 ~~from the higher education partner.~~

21 ~~(iv) The Division of Education Renewal Zones may~~
 22 ~~include within an education renewal zone any school within the education~~
 23 ~~service cooperative area provided that no more than ten (10) schools may~~
 24 ~~participate in any single education renewal zone.~~

25 ~~(v) The Division of Education Renewal Zones may~~
 26 ~~designate up to a maximum of three (3) education renewal zones within any~~
 27 ~~single education service cooperative area.~~

28 ~~(C) In designating education renewal zones and selecting~~
 29 ~~schools for participation in a particular zone, the Division of Education~~
 30 ~~Renewal Zones shall give priority to schools that meet one (1) or more of the~~
 31 ~~following criteria:~~

32 ~~(i) The school is identified as a school at risk for~~
 33 ~~meeting school performance indicators for all students or for any one (1)~~
 34 ~~identified subpopulation under the Arkansas state plan under the Every~~
 35 ~~Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95;~~

36 ~~(ii) The school lies within a school district~~

1 ~~classified by the state board as in need of Level 5—Intensive support under~~
 2 ~~the Arkansas Educational Support and Accountability Act, § 6-15-2901 et seq.;~~

3 ~~(iii) The school demonstrates an inability to~~
 4 ~~provide the minimum number of course offerings as determined by the state~~
 5 ~~through the conventional hiring of qualified teachers;~~

6 ~~(iv) The school is within a school district with an~~
 7 ~~average daily membership of fewer than one thousand five hundred (1,500)~~
 8 ~~students; or~~

9 ~~(v) The school serves a student population that~~
 10 ~~exceeds the statewide average rate of participation in free or reduced price~~
 11 ~~lunch programs; and~~

12 (4)(A) A local advisory group.

13 (B) Each education renewal zone shall form a local
 14 advisory group composed of a representative of the following groups:

15 (i) The higher education partner;

16 (ii) The education service cooperative ~~which that~~
 17 includes the area in which the education renewal zone is located;

18 (iii) ~~The~~ Each public school or school district
 19 participating in the education renewal zone; and

20 (iv) ~~Two (2) parents who have children attending a~~
 21 ~~public school participating in the education renewal zone; and~~ Parents or
 22 community members, or both.

23 ~~(v) Each community in which there is a school~~
 24 ~~participating in the education renewal zone.~~

25 ~~(C) The Division of Education Renewal Zones may designate~~
 26 ~~up to a maximum of three (3) education renewal zones within any single~~
 27 ~~education service cooperative area.~~

28 ~~(D)(C)~~ The membership and staff of local advisory groups
 29 shall be reflective of the diversity of the population ~~being served by the~~
 30 ~~education renewal zone~~ of the state.; ~~and~~

31 ~~(5)(A) A technical assistance provider.~~

32 ~~(B) Any two year community or technical college, technical~~
 33 ~~support organization, or other entity may participate in the education~~
 34 ~~renewal zone at the discretion of the Division of Education Renewal Zones and~~
 35 ~~in collaboration with a designated higher education partner and a designated~~
 36 ~~education service cooperative.~~

1
2 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2503 is amended to read as follows:
3 6-15-2503. Inclusion of schools within designated education renewal
4 zone.

5 (a)(1) ~~The Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ Office of Education
6 Renewal Zones, ~~the State Board of Education~~ Division of Elementary and
7 Secondary Education, and the local school districts shall exercise due
8 diligence to assure, to the extent that funds are available, that each school
9 identified as a school in need of the specialized support and services
10 provided by education renewal zones under the Every Student Succeeds Act,
11 Pub. L. No. 114-95, is included in a designated education renewal zone.

12 (2) ~~The state board~~ State Board of Education may promulgate
13 rules establishing criteria for the placement of schools in ~~need of support~~
14 ~~in a designated~~ education renewal ~~zone~~ zones if insufficient funds exist to
15 place all schools in need of the specialized support and services provided by
16 education renewal zones in a designated education renewal zone.

17 (b) At its discretion, the ~~division office~~ office may include any school
18 ~~regardless of its eligibility under the criteria in § 6-15-2502(d)(3)(C)(i)-~~
19 ~~(v) if it~~ the office determines, on the basis of location, characteristics of
20 ~~its~~ the school's faculty or leadership, needs of the students, or other
21 factors, that the inclusion of ~~such a~~ the school ~~significantly strengthens~~
22 ~~the prospect of the education renewal zone in meeting its school improvement~~
23 ~~goals~~ would support the school's continuous improvement goals.

24 (c) At its discretion, the ~~division office~~ office may change participating
25 schools within each education renewal zone.
26

27 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2504 is amended to read as follows:
28 6-15-2504. School-level improvement ~~plans—Development—Provisions—~~
29 ~~Implementation~~ plan implementation.

30 (a) Each school participating in an education renewal zone shall
31 ~~develop and implement a~~ include in its school-level improvement plan required
32 in § 6-15-2914 the following:-

33 ~~(b) Each school-level improvement plan shall at a minimum include the~~
34 ~~following:-~~

- 35 (1) Goals for improving student achievement;
36 (2) Measurable benchmarks for achieving student improvement

1 goals;

2 (3) A timeline for reaching goals in improving student
3 achievement; and

4 (4) Requirements for services to be provided by the education
5 renewal zone partners.

6 ~~(e)~~(b) The partners within a specific education renewal zone shall
7 develop a strategic plan that is responsive to the needs of the individual
8 ~~school~~ school-level improvement plans.

9 ~~(d)~~(c) The education renewal zone strategic plan shall at a minimum
10 provide for the following:

11 (1) Collaboration between and among the higher education
12 institution partners, education service cooperatives, schools, and
13 ~~communities~~ parents or community members, or both, participating in the
14 education renewal zone, including the academic departments ~~within~~ of the
15 higher education institution partners;

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

20 (B) Funds received by school districts ~~for~~ from the
21 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education Public School Fund Account for
22 professional development may be used to provide funding for the professional
23 development required under subdivision (c)(2)(A) of this section ~~requirements~~
24 ~~of the education renewal zone school district partners;~~

25 ~~(3) Enhancement and expansion of local school curricula~~
26 ~~offerings through the use of two-way interactive television to include~~
27 ~~advanced placement, dual credit, and advanced high school courses;~~

28 ~~(4) The sharing of faculty for core course offerings when~~
29 ~~schools are unable to hire highly qualified teachers in core subject areas~~
30 ~~required for college entrance or teachers necessary to meet state~~
31 ~~accreditation standards;~~

32 ~~(5)~~(3) A strategy to recruit and retain highly qualified
33 teachers ~~with particular focus on hard-to-staff schools;~~ by:

34 (A) Providing opportunities and support for teacher
35 profession growth; and

36 (B) Providing opportunities for collaboration;

1 (4) Evidence-based practices to support schools in providing
 2 student-focused education;

3 ~~(6) A system for mentoring teachers with three (3) or fewer~~
 4 ~~years of professional service;~~

5 ~~(7) Active participation of the community in the work of the~~
 6 ~~school;~~

7 ~~(8)~~(5) Active involvement of parents in the academic work of the
 8 student; and

9 ~~(9)~~(6) A means of collecting the data necessary to evaluate the
 10 progress of each participating public school and the education renewal zone
 11 in its entirety.

12
 13 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-15-2505 is amended to read as follows:
 14 6-15-2505. Annual report.

15 (a) Each education renewal zone, using guidelines and indicators set
 16 by the ~~Division of Education Renewal Zones~~ Office of Education Renewal Zones,
 17 shall prepare an annual report to the ~~division~~ office describing the progress
 18 toward accomplishing the goals of the education renewal zone.

19 (b) The ~~division~~ office shall prepare an annual report ~~to~~ for the
 20 Governor, the General Assembly, and the State Board of Education describing
 21 the progress toward accomplishing the goals of the individual education
 22 renewal zones and the overall education renewal zone program.

23 (c) The ~~division~~ office shall establish a website, accessible by the
 24 public, to provide for broad dissemination of both the education renewal zone
 25 plans and strategies and the results of the annual reports on progress toward
 26 accomplishing the goals of the individual education renewal zones and the
 27 overall education renewal zone program.

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 30 **APPROVED: 2/23/21**