

Hall of the House of Representatives
89th General Assembly - Regular Session, 2013
Amendment Form

Subtitle of House Bill No. 2055

TO CREATE AN ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR AGRICULTURE.

Amendment No. 1 to House Bill No. 2055

Amend House Bill No. 2055 as originally introduced:

Add Senator Rapert as a cosponsor of the bill

AND

Page 1, line 8, delete "AN ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR AGRICULTURE" and substitute "THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, ARTS, AND TECHNOLOGY"

AND

Delete the subtitle in its entirety and substitute:

"TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS SCHOOL FOR AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, ARTS, AND TECHNOLOGY."

AND

Page 1, delete everything after the enacting clause and substitute:

"SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS. The General Assembly finds that:

(1) Arkansas has a strong rural population that is greater than forty-three percent (43%) of the state's total population according to the 2010 census;

(2) Arkansas should value and retain its rural youth and prepare them for future agricultural and environmental careers in this state;

(3) Training and education in agricultural and environmental sciences, arts, and technology can prepare Arkansas rural youth not only for farming, animal management, and forestry careers, but also for employment that leads to a career in information technology, management, cooperatives, transportation and logistics, accounting, sales, utilities, waterways, and conservation;



(4) Arkansas already provides energy from natural gas, crude oil, nuclear electric power, and renewable energy sources such as hydropower, geothermal, solar, and wind energy;

(5) According to the University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture:

(A) Agriculture accounted for sixteen billion dollars (\$16,000,000,000) of value added to the Arkansas economy in 2010;

(B) Arkansas ranks first in the nation in the production of rice and baitfish, second in the nation in the production of broilers, and third in the nation in the production of catfish, turkeys, and cotton;

(C) Arkansas produces almost one-half (1/2) of all rice grown in the United States;

(D) Soybean production in Arkansas has a direct value-added contribution of five hundred twenty million dollars (\$520,000,000);

(E) One (1) of every six (6) jobs in Arkansas is related to agriculture;

(F) Arkansas is the first state to grow edamame commercially;

(G) The forestry sector accounted for 27,081 jobs in Arkansas in 2010; and

(H) Arkansas is considered one of the leading paper-producing states;

(6) Farmers and ranchers spend more than one hundred twenty million dollars (\$120,000,000) every year on conservation programs that help protect our natural resources;

(7) There are nearly fifty thousand (50,000) farms in Arkansas, and ninety-seven percent (97%) of those farms are family-owned;

(8) Many agricultural and environmental industries are able to form partnerships and provide support to Arkansas public school students focusing on these careers; and

(9) The state should establish a school dedicated to:

(A) Developing specialized agricultural and environmental the specialized skills and knowledge in Arkansas's public school students; and

(B) Keeping those students in Arkansas as agricultural or environmental entrepreneurs or to fill existing employment needs in and attract businesses from agricultural and environmental industries.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 52, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

Subchapter 3 - Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology

6-52-301. Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology established - Location.

(a)(1) The Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology is established for the purposes under § 6-52-303 to provide one (1) or more public schools that serve students at any level of Kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) in Arkansas.

(2)(A) The school may consist of one (1) or more campuses in the state, each of which shall be located on the campus of an Arkansas land grant

university, at another Arkansas institution of higher education, or at another appropriate facility that can provide the land, equipment, classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities necessary for the proper operation and support of the school.

(B) The school shall be established in a location that:

(i) Is in close proximity to land and a water supply that are suitable for agriculture or conservation; and

(ii) Has access to fiber optic communication or other technology sufficient to support the technological needs of the school.

(C) The school may have a residential or nonresidential campus.

(b)(1) The school shall be funded by an appropriation from the General Assembly for the operation of the school and by grants, contributions, or donations received by the Department of Education for the support of the school.

(2) Students selected to attend the school shall not be required to pay tuition, fees, or, if dormitories are provided room and board.

(c) The school shall be administered by the department with the advice and counsel of the advisory board under § 6-52-302.

(d)(1) By March 1, 2014, the department shall develop a plan for the structure, operation, and funding of the school that includes equitable procedures for student recruitment and retention.

(2) The department shall publish a request for proposals to solicit proposals from institutions of higher education or other appropriate organizations or agencies for hosting the school.

(3) By July 1, 2015, the department shall select a location for the school to begin operation for the 2015-2016 school year.

(e)(1) The department shall prepare the biennial budget request for the school's operation and shall submit the request to the State Board of Education for inclusion in the biennial budget request of the department for funding programs from the Public School Fund.

(2) The department may receive contributions, donations, gifts, or other forms of financial assistance, property, land, equipment, materials, or labor from persons, foundations, trust funds, corporations, organizations and other private or public sources to be expended for the operation of the school.

6-52-302. Advisory board.

(a) A seven-member advisory board for the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology is established for the general purpose of providing support and advice concerning the operation of the school.

(b)(1) The advisory board consists of:

(A) The following members appointed by the Commissioner of Education:

(i) One (1) person who holds an administrator's license issued by the State Board of Education and has taught or served as an administrator in a school in an agricultural community;

(ii) Three (3) persons, each of whom represents a different sector of the agriculture industry;

(iii) One (1) person who holds a teaching license issued by the state board in an agriculture content area; and

(iv) One (1) person appointed by the President of the Arkansas Science and Technology Authority; and

(B) One (1) member of the Governor's Workforce Cabinet or, if the cabinet does not exist, one (1) member appointed by the Governor.

(2) A member of the board shall not be an employee of the school.

(3) Appointees shall serve a term of three (3) years, as follows:

(A) Two (2) of the initial appointees shall be appointed for a term of one year;

(B) Two (2) of the initial appointees shall be appointed for a term of two years; and

(C) Three (3) of the initial appointees shall be appointed for a term of three years;

(D) Subsequent appointments to the board shall be for three-year terms.

(4) A member of the board shall not serve more than nine (9) years.

(5) The board annually shall elect a chair and other officers as the board deems appropriate.

(c) The duties of the advisory board are to:

(1) Recommend implementation and establishment of policies;

(2) Serve as a liaison between the school, parents, and other constituents;

(3) Provide meaningful advice and recommendations to further the development and operation of the school;

(4) Assist in securing financial support for the school;

(5) Advise the superintendent of the school and the commissioner regarding the educational, service, and financial needs of the school;

(6) Accept and execute specific assignments made by the commissioner or the state board;

(7) Keep informed on matters necessary to promote the educational aims of the school for the benefit of the students;

(8) Study in detail the reports and issues placed before it by the superintendent, commissioner, or state board; and

(9) Promote in diverse ways the growth and development in excellence of the school.

(d) The advisory board shall have oversight concerning the school's operating budget, internal governance, and methods of operations.

6-52-303. Purpose.

(a) The purposes of the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology are to:

(1) Attract students who intend to remain in or return to agricultural areas and who possess the aptitude to provide critical services necessary to the success of Arkansas's agricultural communities;

(2) Prepare students for occupations or postsecondary education related to:

(A) Agriculture;

(B) Agriscience;

(C) Agribusiness;

(D) Agritourism;

(E) The care and management of animals;
(F) Aquaculture;
(G) Forestry;
(H) Horticulture; and
(I) Other environmental sciences, including without limitation wind, water, tree, plant, and soil science, technology, and conservation;

(3) Form partnerships with agricultural and environmental industries and organizations that:

(A) Support the school with one (1) or more of the following:

(i) Funding;
(ii) Land;
(iii) Instructional assistance or expertise;
(iv) Technology, materials, and equipment; and
(v) Internships, mentoring, or other career-related opportunities for the students;

(4) Provide flexible opportunities for learning, which may include without limitation:

(A) Project-based learning to provide students:
(i) The opportunity to apply skills and knowledge to real problems; and
(ii) Be exposed to feedback and evaluation from industry professionals;

(B) Internships and on-the-job learning opportunities; and
(C) Online and hybrid classroom teaching;

(5) Develop curriculum and materials to improve instruction in agricultural and environmental sciences, arts, and technology to improve instruction in science and technology to other public schools in the state.

(c) To reduce the duplication of services while maximizing student learning and acquisition of skills, the school also may offer:

(1) Vocational-technical education in conjunction with other public schools; and

(2) Concurrent credit and other programs in conjunction with institutions of higher education.

6-52-304. Superintendent.

(a) The Department of Education shall employ a superintendent for the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology who shall serve at the pleasure of the Commissioner of Education.

(b) The superintendent shall be the chief administrative officer of the school and administer the school according to the policies established by the department.

(c) The superintendent shall employ other personnel as he or she deems necessary for the operation of the school.

(d) The superintendent and other personnel employed for the operation of the school:

(1) Are employees of the State of Arkansas; and
(2) Earn credited service and are eligible for membership in the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System or the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System.

6-52-305. State Board of Education regulations.

(a) The State Board of Education may promulgate rules to implement this subchapter.

(b) All state board rules shall apply to the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology but the Commissioner of Education may waive or modify a rule to provide the flexibility needed to accomplish the purposes and intent of this subchapter.

6-52-306. State agency technical assistance.

(a) The following state agencies shall provide technical assistance to the staff of the school:

- (1) Department of Education;
- (2) Department of Higher Education;
- (3) Arkansas Agriculture Department;
- (4) Department of Parks and Tourism;
- (5) Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality;
- (6) Arkansas Science and Technology Authority; and
- (7) Arkansas Economic Development Commission.

(b) The Department of Education may contract with other agencies or private research centers to carry out its responsibilities for the operation of the school.

6-52-307. Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology Fund.

(a) There is created on the books of the Treasurer of State, the Auditor of State, and the Chief Fiscal Officer of the State a fund to be known as the "Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology Fund".

(b) The fund shall be used to provide for the maintenance, operation, and improvement required by the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology in carrying out its powers, functions, and duties as set out by law.

(c) The fund shall consist of moneys allocated and transferred from the Educational Excellence Trust Fund, any general revenues provided by the Revenue Stabilization Law, § 19-5-101 et seq., and any other moneys authorized by law.

6-52-308. School qualifies as local education agency.

(a) The Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology meets the definition of a "local education agency" because the school is a public authority legally constituted within this state to perform a service function for public, primary, and secondary schools and is a public institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public school.

(b) This section intends to recognize the function of the school and to provide eligibility to the school to receive federal funds.

6-52-309. Charter school option.

(a) The Commissioner of Education may petition the State Board of Education for the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology to receive public charter school status under The Arkansas Charter Schools Act of 1999, § 6-23-101 et seq.

(b) If the petition is granted, funding for the public charter school shall be made through an appropriation by the General Assembly for the Arkansas School for Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Arts, and Technology."

The Amendment was read _____
By: Representative Hutchison
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Chief Clerk