

ARKANSAS SENATE
93rd General Assembly - Regular Session, 2021
Amendment Form

Subtitle of Senate Bill No. 349

TO ADJUST FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT OFFER CERTAIN TYPES OF READING PRACTICES, INTERVENTIONS, AND CURRICULUM THAT ARE NOT ALIGNED WITH THE SCIENCE OF READING.

Amendment No. 1 to Senate Bill 349

Amend Senate Bill No. 349 as originally introduced:

Page 1, line 14, delete "OF READING;" and substitute "OF READING; TO CREATE THE EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN WITHIN THE DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION;"

AND

Delete the subtitle in its entirety and substitute:

"TO ADJUST FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
THAT OFFER CERTAIN TYPES OF READING
PRACTICES, INTERVENTIONS, AND CURRICULUM
NOT ALIGNED WITH THE SCIENCE OF READING;
AND TO CREATE THE EDUCATION OMBUDSMAN."

AND

Page 2, line 2, delete "If the state board" and substitute "Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, if the state board"

AND

Page 2, delete line 19, and substitute the following:
"under subdivision (i)(3)(B)(ii)(a) of this section.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-17-429, concerning the Right to Read Act, is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

(1)(1) The Secretary of the Department of Education shall hire an Education Ombudsman to assist the division in the enforcement of this section, including without limitation enforcing the requirements for:

(A) Demonstrating proficiency;



- (B) Providing professional development; and
- (C) Using a permitted program of instruction.

(2) The secretary may designate additional requirements related to public education, including without limitation the enforcement of literacy requirements.

(3) The secretary shall supervise the Education Ombudsman and shall not delegate supervision to an employee of the division.

(4)(A) The minimum qualifications for the Education Ombudsman shall include a master's degree in:

- (i) Education; or
- (ii) A related field.

(B) An individual who has served as a past public school district superintendent or who serves as a current public school district superintendent is not eligible to serve as the Education Ombudsman under this section.

(5) The Education Ombudsman may:

(A) Communicate with:

(i) A public school student, with permission from a parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of the public school student;

(ii) A parent, legal guardian, or person standing in loco parentis of a public school student; and

(iii) Administration, faculty, and staff employed by a public school district or open-enrollment public charter school;

(B) Review an issue or concern related to the education of a public school student enrolled in a public school or open-enrollment public charter school;

(C) Recommend training and resources to a public school, public school district, or open-enrollment public charter school; and

(D) Request support and assistance from the division to be provided to a public school, public school district, or open-enrollment public charter school.

(6)(A) The Education Ombudsman shall prepare and submit an annual report to the state board concerning the work of the Education Ombudsman and any recommendations related to the focus areas of the Education Ombudsman.

(B) The report required under subdivision (1)(6)(A) of this section shall be submitted every two (2) years to the:

- (i) House Committee on Education; and
- (ii) Senate Committee on Education."

The Amendment was read the first time, rules suspended and read the second time and _____
By: Senator A. Clark
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Secretary