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INTERIM STUDY PROPOSAL 2019-068

State of Arkansas
92nd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2019

As Engrossed: H3/25/19

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1390

By: Representatives Lowery, Cozart

Filed with: House Committee on Education
pursuant to A.C.A. §10-3-217.

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING THE DATES FOR THE BEGINNING OF THE
SCHOOL YEAR; TO AMEND THE DATE ON WHICH PUBLIC
SCHOOLS SHALL BEGIN THE SCHOOL YEAR; TO ALLOW A
PUBLIC SCHOOL TO TRANSITION FROM A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF
DAYS REQUIRED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR TO A CERTAIN
AMOUNT OF HOURS REQUIRED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR; AND
FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE DATE ON WHICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BEGIN THE SCHOOL YEAR; AND TO ALLOW
PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO TRANSITION FROM A
CERTAIN AMOUNT OF DAYS REQUIRED DURING
THE SCHOOL YEAR TO A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF
HOURS REQUIRED DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-10-106(a), concerning the dates for the
beginning and end of the school year is amended to read as follows:

(a)(1)(A) ~~In each school year~~ Beginning with the 2020-2021 school
year, the first day of the school year for student attendance in the public
elementary and secondary schools ~~of the State of Arkansas~~ shall not be:
(i) ~~On or after the Monday of the week in which~~
~~August 19 falls;~~

1 (ii) ~~Not~~ earlier than August 14; and the third
2 Monday of each August

3 (iii) ~~Not later than August 26.~~

4 (B) The date for beginning the school year shall be
5 determined by the board of directors of ~~the~~ each school district in
6 accordance with subdivision (a)(1)(A) of this section.

7 (C) Labor Day shall be celebrated as a school holiday in
8 all the school districts of the state, and school shall not be held on that
9 date.

10 ~~(D)~~(C) As used in this section, "week" means a seven-day
11 period that begins on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday.

12 (2)(A) The Department of Education may grant a school district a
13 waiver to begin school on ~~an earlier or~~ a later date if the department
14 determines that there exists a material and substantial reason for the school
15 district to begin school on ~~an earlier or~~ a later date due to very
16 exceptional or emergency circumstances such as a contagious disease outbreak,
17 *inclement weather, or other acts of God.*

18 (B) The department shall not grant a public school
19 district a waiver under § 6-15-103 to begin school on an earlier date.

21 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-16-102, concerning the definition of a
22 "school day" is amended to add an additional subsection to read as follows:

23 (d)(1)(A) A public school or open-enrollment public charter school may
24 transition from a certain number of days for student-teacher interaction time
25 required by the Department of Education to a certain number of hours for
26 student-teacher interaction time if the public school or open-enrollment
27 public charter school submits to the department a plan that accommodates and
28 assures the following without limitation:

- 29 (i) Professional development requirements;
- 30 (ii) Alternative methods of instruction plans;
- 31 (iii) The number of minutes of instruction by a
32 public school teacher required per week during the school year;
- 33 (iv) A plan to ensure that contracts of the public
34 school's teachers are not affected by the transition requested under this
35 subdivision (d)(1)(A); and

1 (v) Any other relevant information regarding aspects
2 of public school education and reporting requirements that may be affected by
3 the transition requested under this subdivision (d)(1)(A).

4 (B) The department shall approve a public school's or
5 open-enrollment public charter school's submitted plan under subdivision
6 (d)(1)(A) of this section unless the public school's or open-enrollment
7 public charter school's submitted plan does not meet the requirements of the
8 department under subdivision (d)(1)(A) of this section.

9 (2) A plan submitted by a public school or open-enrollment
10 public charter school under subdivision (d)(1)(A) of this section shall be
11 submitted to the department by July 1 of the year in which the public school
12 or open-enrollment public charter school is requesting that the transition
13 under subdivision (d)(1)(A) take place.

14 (3) The department shall submit annually by August 1 to the
15 House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education a list of
16 public schools and open-enrollment public charter schools that have requested
17 and received approval for a plan to transition from a certain number of days
18 for student-teacher interaction time to a certain number of hours for
19 student-teacher interaction time under subdivision (d)(1)(A) of this section.

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22 /s/Lowery
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25 Referred requested by the Arkansas House of Representatives

26 Prepared by: TNL/VJF
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