

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Second Extraordinary Session, 2003
4

Call Item 4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1082

5 By: Representative Pickett
6
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE FOR SCHOOL
10 DISTRICTS TO USE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FIVE-
11 YEAR SCHOOL PLAN; TO CREATE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT
12 TEAMS; TO CREATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TEAMS FOR
13 SCHOOLS IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STATUS; AND FOR
14 OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

16 AN ACT TO IMPLEMENT A PROCEDURE FOR
17 SCHOOL DISTRICTS TO USE IN THE
18 DEVELOPMENT OF A FIVE-YEAR SCHOOL PLAN.
19
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21

22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
23

24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, Subchapter 4 is amended
25 to add an additional sections to read as follows:

26 6-15-433. Five-year educational plan - School improvement - Academic
27 assistance teams.

28 (a)(1) Every public school district shall develop a five-year
29 educational plan, as required by the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas
30 Public Schools promulgated by the Department of Education.

31 (2) The five-year educational plan shall be developed by school
32 improvement teams as set forth under § 6-15-1801 through § 6-15-1806.

33 (b) In accordance with §§ 6-15-1901 through 6-15-1918, the
34 accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor,
35 shall create education assistance teams to provide public schools in school
36 improvement status under § 6-15-425 with additional resources to evaluate the



1 school and to provide services that will improve the education of children in
2 the school

3
4 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, is amended to add an
5 additional subchapter to read as follows:

6 6-15-1801. School improvement teams – Five-year educational plan.

7 (a) A school district’s five-year educational plan, as required by the
8 Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools promulgated by the
9 Department of Education, shall be developed by each school’s improvement
10 team.

11 (b)(1) The following are eligible to serve on a school improvement
12 team to develop a five-year educational plan to improve student performance:

- 13 (A) The principal of each school;
- 14 (B) Classroom teachers;
- 15 (C) Instructional support personnel;
- 16 (D) Teacher assistants assigned to the school building;
- 17 (E) Parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in the
18 school.

19 (2)(A) Instructional personnel, instructional support personnel,
20 and teacher assistants shall be elected by their respective groups by secret
21 ballot unless the local school board has adopted an election policy. Parents
22 or legal guardians shall be elected by parents or legal guardians of children
23 enrolled in the school in an election conducted by the parent and teacher
24 organization of the school or, if none exists, by the largest organization of
25 parents formed for this purpose.

26 (B) Parents or legal guardians serving on school
27 improvement teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of
28 the students enrolled in that school.

29
30 6-15-1802. Five-year educational plan – Parental involvement.

31 (a) Parental involvement is a critical component of school success and
32 positive student achievement; therefore, it is the intent of the General
33 Assembly that parents or legal guardians, along with teachers, have a
34 substantial role in developing the five-year educational plan.

35 (b) To this end, school improvement team meetings shall be held at a
36 convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.

1
2 6-15-1803. Five-year educational plan – Local school involvement.

3 (a)(1) Support among affected staff members is essential to successful
4 implementation of a five-year educational plan to address improved student
5 performance.

6 (2) The principal of the school shall present the proposed five-
7 year educational plan to assistant principals, instructional personnel,
8 instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned to the
9 school for their review and vote.

10 (3) The vote shall be by secret ballot.

11 (4) The principal shall submit the five-year educational plan to
12 the local school board only if the proposed five-year educational plan has
13 the approval of a majority of the staff who voted on the plan.

14 (b)(1) The local school board shall accept or reject the five-year
15 educational plan.

16 (2) The local school board shall not make any substantive
17 changes in any school improvement plan that it accepts.

18 (3) If the local school board rejects a five-year educational
19 plan, the local school board shall state with specificity its reasons for
20 rejecting the plan. The school improvement team may then prepare another
21 plan, present it to the principals, assistant principals, instructional
22 personnel, instructional support personnel, and teacher assistants assigned
23 to the school building for a vote, and then submit it to the local school
24 board to accept or reject.

25 (4) If no five-year educational plan is accepted for a school
26 within sixty (60) days after its initial submission to the local school
27 board, the school or the local school board may ask to use the process to
28 resolve disagreements recommended in the guidelines developed by the State
29 Board of Education under this chapter.

30 (5) If this request is made, both the school and the local
31 school board shall participate in the process to resolve disagreements. If
32 there is no request to use that process, then the local school board may
33 develop a five-year educational plan for the school.

34 (6) The local school board shall utilize the school's proposed
35 five-year educational plan to the maximum extent possible when developing
36 such a plan.

1
 2 6-15-1804. Five-year educational plan – Strategies to improve student
 3 performance.

4 The five-year educational plan shall use the following strategies to
 5 improve student performance:

6 (1) A plan for the use of staff development funds that may be
 7 made available to the school by the local school board to implement the five-
 8 year educational plan;

9 (2) If the school serves students in kindergarten or grade one
 10 (1), a plan for preparing students to read at grade level by the time they
 11 enter grade two (2).

12 (3)(A) A plan to require grades kindergarten and one (1)
 13 teachers to notify parents or guardians when their child is not reading at
 14 grade level and is at risk of not reading at grade level by the time the
 15 child enters grade two (2).

16 (B) The plan may include any of the following:

17 (i) The use of assessments to monitor students’
 18 progress in learning to read;

19 (ii) The use of strategies for teachers and parents
 20 or legal guardians to implement what will help students improve and expand
 21 their reading;

22 (iii) Recognition of teachers that are effective at
 23 preparing students to read at grade level; and

24 (iv) Recognition of strategies that are effective at
 25 preparing students to read at grade level;

26 (4) A plan to address school safety and discipline concerns;

27 (5) A plan that specifies the effective instructional practices
 28 and methods to be used to improve the academic performance of students
 29 identified as at risk of academic failure or at risk of dropping out of
 30 school;

31 (6) A comprehensive parent involvement program; and

32 (7) A comprehensive conflict resolution program, if necessary.

33
 34 6-15-1805. School improvement teams – Safe and orderly schools.

35 (a)(1) A school improvement team or a parent organization at a school
 36 may ask the local school board to provide assistance in promoting or

1 restoring safety and an orderly learning environment at a school.

2 (2) The school improvement team or the parent organization shall
 3 file a copy of this request with the State Board of Education.

4 (3) If the local school board fails to provide adequate
 5 assistance to the school, then the school improvement team or the parent
 6 organization may ask the state board to provide an education assistance team
 7 to the school for this purpose.

8 (b) The state board may provide an education assistance team as
 9 provided under this chapter to a school in order to promote or restore safety
 10 and an orderly learning environment at a school if one (1) or more of the
 11 following applies:

12 (1) The local school board or the superintendent requests that
 13 the state board provide an assistance team to a school and the state board
 14 determines that the school needs assistance; or

15 (2) The state board determines within ten (10) days after its
 16 receipt of the request for assistance from a school improvement team or the
 17 parent organization of a school that the school needs assistance and that the
 18 local school board has failed to provide adequate assistance to the school.

19 (c)(1) If an education assistance team is assigned to a school under
 20 this section, the team shall spend a sufficient amount of time at the school
 21 to:

22 (A) Assess the problems at the school;

23 (B) Assist school personnel with resolving those problems;

24 and

25 (C) Work with school personnel and others to develop a
 26 long-term plan for restoring and maintaining safety and an orderly learning
 27 environment at the school.

28 (2)(A) The education assistance team also shall make
 29 recommendations to the local school board and the superintendent on the
 30 actions of the local school board and the superintendent should consider
 31 taking steps to resolve problems at the school.

32 (B) The recommendations shall be in writing and are public
 33 record.

34 (d) If an assistance team is assigned to a school under this section,
 35 the powers given to the state board, and under this chapter shall apply as if
 36 the school had been identified as a low-performing school under this chapter.

6-15-1806. Five-year educational plans - Time limitation.

(a)(1) A five-year educational plan shall remain in effect for no more than five (5) years.

(2) However, the school improvement team may amend the plan as often as it is necessary or appropriate.

(b) If, at any time, any part of a five-year educational plan becomes unlawful or the local school board finds that a five-year educational plan is impeding student performance at a school, the local school board may vacate the relevant portion of the plan and may direct the school to revise that portion.

(c) The procedures set out in this section shall apply to amendments and revisions to five-year educational plans.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, is amended to add an additional subchapter to read as follows:

6-15-1901. Education assistance teams – Creation.

(a) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor, shall create education assistance teams to provide public schools in school improvement status under § 6-15-425 with additional resources to evaluate the school and to provide services that will improve the education of children in the school.

(b) The education assistance teams shall consist of the following members:

(1) Currently practicing teachers and staff;

(2) Representatives of higher education;

(3) School administrators; and

(4) Others that the accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor, considers to be appropriate.

(c) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor, shall ensure that each team member possesses a high degree of knowledge and skill in the following areas:

(1) School leadership;

(2) Curriculum and instruction;

(3) Classroom management and discipline;

(4) Academic assessment;

1 (5) Home-school relations; and

2 (6) Evaluation and research.

3 (d)(1) Team members shall have the following qualifications:

4 (A) Either:

5 (i) Be certified in elementary or middle school
6 education to serve on an education assistance team at the grade kindergarten
7 through eight (K-8) level; or

8 (ii) Have teaching experience in either English,
9 mathematics, social studies, science, or grades kindergarten through twelve
10 (K-12) reading to serve on an education assistance team at the high school
11 level; and

12 (B) At least four (4) years of successful experience in
13 classroom instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics, or in the
14 appropriate content area for high school.

15 (2) Preference is given to applicants whose performance has been
16 recognized as exemplary.

17
18 6-15-1902. Education assistance teams – Duties.

19 Education assistance teams shall:

20 (1) Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of all facets of
21 the school;

22 (2)(A) Evaluate teachers and administrators;

23 (B) When evaluating teachers and administrators the
24 education assistance team may make recommendations of ways for teachers and
25 administrators to improve classroom instruction or school administration,
26 including but not limited to, recommending specific professional development
27 objectives which may include requiring the teacher or administrator to obtain
28 additional course work in subjects taught or administration duties.

29 (3) Collaborate with the school’s faculty and staff to revise and
30 assist with the implementation of the school improvement plan, as necessary;

31 (4) Make recommendations for continuous improvement as the plan
32 is implemented;

33 (5) Review the school’s progress; and

34 (6) Make appropriate progress reports to the following:

35 (A) Superintendent;

36 (B) Local school board;

1 (d) Once the education assistance team and the school improvement team
2 have carefully reviewed all available data, the assistance team will
3 recommend specific actions that will improve student achievement at the
4 school.

5
6 6-15-1904. Education assistance teams – Teacher and administrator
7 evaluation - Collaboration.

8 (a) The education assistance teams shall evaluate at least
9 semiannually the following personnel at the low-performing school and make
10 findings and recommendations concerning their performances:

11 (1) The principal;

12 (2) The classroom teachers; and

13 (3) Other personnel.

14 (b) The education assistance team shall collaborate with the school
15 staff, the superintendent, the administration, and the local school board to
16 design, implement, and monitor a school improvement plan that, if fully
17 implemented, can be expected to alleviate the targeted problems and improve
18 student performance.

19 (c) After a comprehensive review of the school, the education
20 assistance team will work collaboratively with the superintendent and the
21 administration to determine and prioritize needs, plan appropriate
22 strategies, address the identified needs, and develop the school improvement
23 plan.

24
25 6-15-1905. Education assistance teams – Recommendations for
26 improvement - Review progress - Report progress.

27 (a)(1) The education assistance team shall make recommendations as the
28 school develops and implements the school improvement plan.

29 (2) The team and the school staff may accept the school's
30 original plan or develop a new, more focused plan.

31 (3) Continuous assessment of the school improvement plan and the
32 progress of the school improvement plan is required.

33 (4) The team and the school staff shall identify areas of the
34 plan for adjustment.

35 (5) The plan may be modified as necessary to serve as a working
36 guide for the school improvement process.

1 (b)(1) The education assistance team shall review the school's
 2 progress under the school improvement plan.

3 (2) The review should include an analysis of student
 4 achievement.

5 (3) The review should be conducted monthly.

6 (c)(1) The education assistance team shall report, as appropriate, to
 7 the local school board of each community and the State Board of Education on
 8 the school's progress.

9 (2) Monthly reports shall be submitted by education assistance
 10 team leaders to the accountability section of the Department of Education, or
 11 its successor.

12 (3) The progress reports shall be provided to the principal and
 13 the staff of the school, the superintendent, and the local school board
 14 chairperson.

15 (4) The progress reports to the state board shall include the
 16 following information:

17 (A) The identified challenges and needs;

18 (B) Recommendations; and

19 (C) The level of cooperation exhibited by the principal,
 20 school staff, and the superintendent.

21 (d)(1) The education assistance team shall provide feedback to the
 22 low-performing school at least monthly.

23 (2) The monthly report shall include a status report on
 24 benchmarks, findings, and recommendations.

25
 26 6-15-1906. Education assistance teams – Vacated school improvement
 27 plans - Evaluations.

28 (a) The education assistance team may determine that a low-performing
 29 school's five-year education plan developed under this chapter is impeding
 30 student performance at the school.

31 (b) If this determination is made, the education assistance team may
 32 recommend to the local school board that it vacate the relevant portions of
 33 the school improvement plan and direct the low-performing school to revise
 34 the portions of the plan that are no longer appropriate.

35 (c)(1) The education assistance team is responsible for continuous
 36 evaluation of the school's improvement and for working with the school

1 improvement team to ensure that the plan is current and accurately reflects
 2 the goals and objectives of the school.

3 (2) On rare occasions, the assistance team and the school
 4 improvement team may have a difference of opinion on the relevance of the
 5 plan.

6 (3) If that disagreement cannot be resolved at the school level,
 7 the assistance team may request assistance from the local school board.

8 (4) The local school board shall adopt a plan that is in the
 9 best interests of the children in that school, including strategies that have
 10 the greatest impact on student achievement.

11
 12 6-15-1907. Education assistance teams – Schools showing lack of
 13 progress.

14 (a) If a school fails to improve student performance after assistance
 15 is provided under this chapter, the education assistance team may recommend
 16 that assistance continue, or that the State Board of Education take further
 17 action against the school district under this chapter.

18 (b) If more than two (2) of the schools in a school district are in
 19 school improvement status, the state board has the authority under this
 20 chapter to:

21 (1) Terminate the contracts of the superintendent, principals,
 22 assistant principals, and any other administrative personnel;

23 (2) Appoint an interim administration of the school district; or

24 (3) Suspend the powers and duties of the local school board.

25
 26 6-15-1908. Education assistance teams – Compensation and composition.

27 (a)(1) The members of the education assistance teams who are teachers
 28 and administrators shall be compensated and shall receive employment benefits
 29 for twelve (12) months.

30 (2) The compensated team members shall serve a minimum of one
 31 (1) full school year.

32 (b) The compensated members shall assist designated public schools in
 33 school improvement status.

34 (c) Typical teams will have five (5) members and will, whenever
 35 possible, include educators from the same geographic area of the school that
 36 is in school improvement status.

1
2 6-15-1909. Education assistance team members – Training.

3 Training for education assistance team members shall include the
4 following:

5 (1) Effective intrapersonal, interpersonal, and communication
6 skills;

7 (2) School leadership;

8 (3) Curriculum and instruction;

9 (4) Classroom management and discipline;

10 (5) Academic assessment;

11 (6) Home-school relations; and

12 (7) Evaluation and research.

13
14 6-15-1910. Education assistance team members – Procedures for hiring.

15 (a) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
16 successor, shall use the following selection process:

17 (1)(A) Applicants submit the application information to the
18 accountability section of the Department of Education.

19 (B) Application information is screened to determine which
20 candidates meet qualifications;

21 (2) Qualified applicants are contacted for an interview which
22 will be no less than one and one-half (1 1/2) hours in length; and

23 (3) Following the interview, applicants provide an on-demand
24 writing sample in which the applicant will have thirty (30) minutes to
25 complete.

26 (b)(1) For applicants who meet the qualifications under this section,
27 a reference check is conducted.

28 (2) At least one (1) reference must be the applicant's current
29 education supervisor.

30 (c)(1) The final step in selection for team leaders is a classroom
31 observation by a staff member from the accountability section of the
32 Department of Education, or its successor.

33 (2) Qualified applicants will be given a time frame in which the
34 observation will occur.

35 (d) Qualified applicants who are selected will be notified within two
36 (2) months after completing the process under this section.

1
2 6-15-1911. Education assistance team members – Required application
3 information.

4 (a) The following information shall be included in each application
5 for an education assistance team member:

6 (1) A letter of interest;

7 (2) A statement of commitment;

8 (3) A resume that includes educational background and work
9 experience;

10 (4) A summary of licensure areas, with an attached copy of
11 current teaching license;

12 (5)(A) A list of professional development that the applicant has
13 completed or conducted in the last five (5) years.

14 (B) The list shall include the name of the activity,
15 number of participants, method of delivery, and level;

16 (6) A list of three (3) personal references;

17 (7) A list of three (3) professional references who are not
18 related to the applicant;

19 (8) A copy of the applicant’s students’ test scores for the last
20 three (3) years, or for each year that the applicant has been at his or her
21 current school; and

22 (9) Any additional requirements that the State Board of
23 Education, or accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
24 successor, deem necessary.

25 (b) The accountability section of the Department of Education shall
26 promulgate rules under this section and develop all forms necessary under
27 this section.

28
29 6-15-1912. Education assistance team leaders – Job description.

30 (a) An education assistance team leader shall assist public schools in
31 school improvement status in achieving their performance goals.

32 (b) An education assistance team leader shall have expertise in the
33 administration and supervision of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

34 (c) A minimum of one (1) calendar year of service is required.

35
36 6-15-1913. Education assistance team leaders – Required credentials.

1 The minimum required credentials for an education assistance team
 2 leader are as follows:

3 (1) An advanced degree or certification in administration and
 4 supervision;

5 (2) Four (4) years of demonstrated excellence in teaching or
 6 administration; and

7 (3) A proven track record of success in working with students at
 8 public schools in school improvement status or with underachieving students
 9 and a proven track record in improving performance of those students.

10
 11 6-15-1914. Education assistance team leaders – Duties.

12 (a) An educational assistance team leader shall have the following
 13 duties under this subchapter:

14 (1) Assist public schools in school improvement status in
 15 achieving their growth and performance goals in reading, writing, and
 16 mathematics;

17 (2) Coordinate and conduct a comprehensive school review or
 18 needs assessment to include the following:

19 (A) Observing the school environment;

20 (B) Conferencing with key personnel;

21 (C) Determining the school’s strengths; and

22 (D) Determining the areas in need of improvement at the
 23 school;

24 (3) Create positive rapport with staff to build a long-term,
 25 focused partnership;

26 (4) Provide feedback on the school improvement plan;

27 (5) Assist in determining, coordinating, and delivering needed
 28 professional development;

29 (6) Support team members in the application of effective
 30 instructional practices;

31 (7) Analyze disaggregated test data for school improvement;

32 (8) Collaborate with school administrators to provide formative
 33 and summative observations;

34 (9) Coordinate the team’s activities;

35 (10) Review, compile, and write reports of the school’s
 36 performance results; and

1 (11) Work cooperatively with other team members and staff from
 2 the school, the accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
 3 successor,.

4 (b) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
 5 successor, or the State Board of Education may add other duties by policy or
 6 rules.

7
 8 6-15-1915. Education assistance team leaders – Training.

9 (a) In addition to expertise and experience as classroom teachers or
 10 administrators, education assistance team leaders shall also receive
 11 extensive training, provided through the Department of Education or the
 12 accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor, to
 13 prepare them to help public schools in school improvement status improve
 14 achievement.

15 (b)(1) Education assistance team leaders shall be provided with four
 16 (4) weeks of formal training as well as supplemental training.

17 (2) Topics for training include, but are not limited to, the
 18 following:

19 (A) The law in this subchapter and any related policy and
 20 rules;

21 (B) Other applicable Arkansas school law;

22 (C) The school improvement planning process;

23 (D) Developing a school improvement plan;

24 (E) Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment;

25 (F) Team-building instruction;

26 (G) Applying the code of conduct;

27 (H) Continuous assessment and improvement;

28 (I) Effective curriculum and instructional issues,
 29 strategies and best practices;

30 (J) Bringing about systemic change;

31 (K) Team and school relations;

32 (L) Home and school relations;

33 (M) Staff development;

34 (N) Personnel evaluation;

35 (O) Analyzing and reporting data;

36 (P) Media relations;

- 1 (Q) Application of learning using a case study of a public
- 2 school in school improvement status;
- 3 (R) Exceptional children issues and programs;
- 4 (S) Early childhood initiatives;
- 5 (T) Mediation and facilitation;
- 6 (U) Mentoring;
- 7 (V) Media and technology resources; and
- 8 (W) Accountability and the testing program.

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10 SECTION 4. This act shall apply to the 2004-2005 school year and each

11 school year thereafter.

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