

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

1 State of Arkansas
2 87th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2009
4

As Engrossed: H3/12/09

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1956

5 By: Representative Word
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PROJECT GRADUATION
10 COMMISSION; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
11

Subtitle

12 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS PROJECT
13 GRADUATION COMMISSION.
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17 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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19 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 1, is amended to add an*
20 *additional subchapter to read as follows:*

21 SUBCHAPTER 4 - THE ARKANSAS PROJECT GRADUATION COMMISSION

22 6-1-401. Findings.

23 The General Assembly finds that:

24 (1) Graduation rates are an:

25 (A) Important economic indicator for the state's economy;

26 and

27 (B) Essential indicator of school performance for parents,
28 policy makers, and other concerned community members;

29 (2) Arkansans who fail to earn a high school diploma or
30 postsecondary degree are:

31 (A) At a great disadvantage when it comes to obtaining:

32 (i) High paying jobs; and

33 (ii) Health care; and

34 (B) More likely to:

35 (i) Become parents at a young age; and

36 (ii) Be involved in the criminal justice system; and



1 (3) Low graduation rates adversely affect the economic
2 opportunities of the state and decrease the state's competitive edge.

3 6-1-402. Purpose.

4 The purpose of the Arkansas Project Graduation Commission is to:

5 (1) Investigate high school dropout prevention strategies;

6 (2) Analyze the relationship between high school graduation
7 rates and the state's economy; and

8 (3) Recommend strategies that will increase the overall high
9 school graduation rate of Arkansas students by helping parents, schools, and
10 students identify academic warning signs of dropout.

11 6-1-403. Arkansas Project Graduation Commission.

12 (a) There is created the "Arkansas Project Graduation Commission".

13 (b) The commission is composed of the following members:

14 (1) Three (3) members appointed by the Governor, one (1) of whom
15 shall act as the chair of the commission;

16 (2) Three (3) members appointed by the Speaker of the House of
17 Representatives;

18 (3) Three (3) members appointed by the President Pro Tempore of
19 the Senate;

20 (4) The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee;

21 (5) The Director of the Department of Higher Education or his or
22 her designee; and

23 (6) The Director of the Department of Workforce Education or his
24 or her designee.

25 (c) Each member of the commission shall be a resident of the State of
26 Arkansas throughout his or her term.

27 (d) The appointed members of the commission shall serve staggered
28 terms of three (3) years to be decided by a random draw at the first meeting
29 of the commission, with:

30 (1) Four (4) members serving terms of three (3) years;

31 (2) Four (4) members serving terms of two (2) years; and

32 (3) Four (4) members serving a term of one (1) year.

33 (e) If a vacancy occurs in an appointed position, the vacancy shall be
34 filled for the unexpired term by an appointment made in the same manner as
35 the original appointment.

36 6-1-404. Organization and operation.

1 (a) The Arkansas Project Graduation Commission shall elect annually a
2 chair, a vice chair, and a secretary.

3 (b) The commission shall meet one (1) time each month, rotating
4 meeting locations between the:

5 (1) Department of Education;

6 (2) Department of Higher Education; and

7 (3) Department of Workforce Education.

8 (c) A majority of the commission members constitute a quorum for
9 conducting business.

10 (d) The Department of Education shall provide staff support for the
11 commission.

12 (e)(1) The members of the commission may receive an expense
13 reimbursement for attendance at each monthly meeting in accordance with § 25-
14 16-902.

15 (2) The expense reimbursement shall be paid by the Department of
16 Education from funds available for that purpose.

17 6-1-405. Report.

18 (a) The Arkansas Project Graduation Commission shall report by
19 November 1, 2009, and each year thereafter, to the House Committee on
20 Education and the Senate Committee on Education.

21 (b) The report shall contain, without limitation:

22 (1) Information on:

23 (A) High school graduation rates in the state; and

24 (B) Postsecondary graduation rates in the state;

25 (2) Effective strategies for increasing the:

26 (A) High school graduation rate; and

27 (B) Postsecondary degree completion rate; and

28 (3) The impact high school graduation rates and postsecondary
29 degree completion rates have on the state's economy.

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31 /s/ Word
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