

1 State of Arkansas
2 89th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2013
4

As Engrossed: S3/27/13

A Bill

SENATE BILL 996

5 By: Senator J. Key
6 By: Representative Clemmer
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
10 CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT EXCESSIVE ABSENCES
11 FROM SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
12
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Subtitle

15 TO AMEND PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS CODE
16 CONCERNING PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT
17 EXCESSIVE ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL.
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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22 *SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-18-209 is amended to read as follows:*

23 *6-18-209. Adoption of student attendance policies – Effect of*
24 *~~excessive~~ unexcused absences.*

25 *(a) The board of directors of each school district in this state shall*
26 *adopt student attendance policies.*

27 *(b) Each school district, as a part of its six-year educational plan,*
28 *shall develop strategies for promoting maximum student attendance, including,*
29 *but not limited to, the use of alternative classrooms and in-school*
30 *suspensions in lieu of suspension from school.*

31 *(c) A student attendance policy may include ~~excessive~~ unexcused*
32 *absences as a mandatory basis for denial of promotion or graduation.*
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34 *SECTION 2. The catchline of Arkansas Code § 6-18-222 is amended to*
35 *read as follows:*

36 *6-18-222. Penalty for ~~excessive~~ unexcused absences – Revocation of*



1 *driving privilege.*

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3 *SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-18-222(a)(1), concerning excessive*
4 *absences from school, is amended to read as follows:*

5 *(a)(1)(A)(i) The board of directors of each school district in this*
6 *state shall adopt a student attendance policy, as provided for in § 6-18-209,*
7 *which shall include a certain number of ~~excessive~~ unexcused absences that may*
8 *be used as a basis for denial of course credit, promotion, or graduation.*

9 *(ii) However, ~~excessive~~ unexcused absences shall not*
10 *be a basis for expulsion or dismissal of a student.*

11 *(B) The legislative intent is that a student having*
12 *~~excessive~~ unexcused absences because of illness, accident, or other*
13 *unavoidable reasons should be given assistance in obtaining credit for the*
14 *courses.*

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16 *SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 6-18-222(a)(4)(A)(i), concerning excessive*
17 *absences from school, is amended to read as follows:*

18 *(4)(A)(i) A student's parent, guardian, or person in loco*
19 *parentis and the community truancy board, if the community truancy board has*
20 *been created, shall be notified when the student has accumulated ~~excessive~~*
21 *unexcused absences equal to one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) the total number of absences*
22 *permitted per semester under the school district's or the State Board of*
23 *Career Education's student attendance policy.*

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25 *SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 6-18-222(a)(5)(A), concerning excessive*
26 *absences from school, is amended to read as follows:*

27 *(5)(A) When a student exceeds the number of ~~excessive~~ unexcused*
28 *absences provided for in the district's or the State Board of Career*
29 *Education's student attendance policy, or when a student has violated the*
30 *conditions of an agreement granting special arrangements under subdivision*
31 *(a)(4)(D) of this section, the school district or the adult education program*
32 *shall notify the prosecuting authority and the community truancy board, if a*
33 *community truancy board has been created, and the student's parent, guardian,*
34 *or person in loco parentis shall be subject to a civil penalty through a*
35 *family in need of services action in circuit court, as authorized under*
36 *subdivision (a)(6)(A) of this section, but not to exceed five hundred dollars*

1 *(\$500) plus costs of court and any reasonable fees assessed by the court.*

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/s/J. Key

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