

1 State of Arkansas
2 90th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2015
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1485

5 By: Representative Lampkin
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON THE
9 BEST PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION; FOR THE
10 APPOINTMENT OF TASK FORCE MEMBERS; TO DESCRIBE THE
11 PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE TASK FORCE; AND FOR
12 OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

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15 TO ESTABLISH THE LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE
16 ON THE BEST PRACTICES FOR SPECIAL
17 EDUCATION.
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21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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23 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. TEMPORARY LANGUAGE.

24 (a) There is created the Legislative Task Force on the Best Practices
25 for Special Education.

26 (b) The task force shall consist of the following twenty-one (21)
27 members:

28 (1) The Governor or his or her designee;

29 (2) One (1) member of the General Assembly from the First
30 Congressional District, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
31 Senate;

32 (3) One (1) member of the General Assembly from the Second
33 Congressional District, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
34 Representatives;

35 (4) One (1) member of the General Assembly from the Third
36 Congressional District, appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate;



1 (5) One (1) member of the General Assembly from the Fourth
2 Congressional District, appointed by the Speaker of the House of
3 Representatives;

4 (6) One (1) representative from Arkansas Advocates for Children
5 and Families;

6 (7) One (1) representative from the Arkansas Association of
7 Educational Administrators;

8 (8) One (1) representative from the Arkansas Education
9 Association who is a teacher specializing in special education;

10 (9) One (1) representative from the Arkansas Public Policy
11 Panel;

12 (10) One (1) representative from the Arkansas School Boards
13 Association;

14 (11) One (1) representative from the Department of Education;

15 (12) One (1) representative from the Disability Rights
16 Association;

17 (13) One (1) representative from a charter school origination or
18 support group for charter schools;

19 (14) One (1) representative from an institution of higher
20 education who works in a teacher preparation program specializing in special
21 education;

22 (15) One (1) special education teacher appointed by the
23 Department of Education;

24 (16) Four (4) parents of special education students with one (1)
25 parent to be appointed by each legislative member of the task force; and

26 (17) Two (2) special education students with one (1) student to
27 be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and one (1) student
28 to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

29 (c)(1) The Governor or his or her designee shall call the first
30 meeting of the task force within sixty (60) days of the effective date of
31 this act and shall serve as the chair of the task force at the first meeting.

32 (2) At the first meeting of the task force, the members of the
33 task force shall elect from its membership a chair and other officers as
34 needed for the transaction of business.

35 (3)(A) The task force shall conduct its meetings at the State
36 Capitol or another site selected by the chair.

1 (B) Meetings of the task force shall be held at least one
2 (1) time every three (3) months but may occur more often at the call of the
3 chair.

4 (4) The task force shall establish rules and procedures for
5 conducting its business.

6 (5) If a vacancy occurs on the task force, the vacancy shall be
7 filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

8 (6)(A) Legislative members of the task force shall be paid per
9 diem and mileage as authorized by law for attendance at meetings of interim
10 committees of the General Assembly.

11 (B) Non-legislative members of the task force shall serve
12 without compensation but may receive reimbursement under § 25-16-902.

13 (7)(A) A majority of the members of the task force shall
14 constitute a quorum for transacting business of the task force.

15 (B) No action may be taken by the task force except by a
16 majority vote at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

17 (8) The task force may expend funds and resources in carrying
18 out its purpose and responsibilities that are appropriated or funded to the
19 commission by the General Assembly or a third party.

20 (9) The Bureau of Legislative Research shall provide staff for
21 the task force.

22 (d)(1) The task force shall study and research ways to improve special
23 education and how special education can positively impact student education
24 and achievement outcomes.

25 (2) In executing the duties and responsibilities of the task
26 force, the task force shall:

27 (A) Review the current practice for identifying students
28 for special education services and programs in public schools in Arkansas and
29 other states;

30 (B) Compare outcomes of students participating in special
31 education services in programs in Arkansas with those in other states;

32 (C) Review the requirements for teacher preparation and
33 licensure of special education teachers in Arkansas and other states;

34 (D) Review the requirements for professional development
35 related to special education, including anticipated changes to professional
36 development in Arkansas and other states;

1 (E) Review support staff and staffing ratios for special
2 education services and programs, including nurses, teacher aides, and
3 personal student aids;

4 (F) Review discipline practices for students in special
5 education programs in Arkansas and other states;

6 (G) Review Response to Intervention (RTI) practices in
7 Arkansas, including identifying RTI programs in public schools that are
8 successful and can be identified as best practices;

9 (H) Review the current practice for screening students for
10 learning disabilities and the services provided for students with learning
11 disabilities;

12 (I) Review the availability of support services for
13 special education programs, students, and families, including without
14 limitation behavioral health services and social services with an effort made
15 to identify best practices;

16 (J) Review the practices of school districts regarding
17 self-contained classrooms, inclusion programs, and resource rooms, including
18 model policies and programs in Arkansas and other states;

19 (K) Review the use of outside services and organizations
20 by school districts that provide the best level or support for students
21 receiving special education services or participating in special education
22 programs;

23 (L) Review the facilities, equipment, and materials
24 available in school districts for special education services and programs;

25 (M) Compare the amount of academic instruction with the
26 training time for independent function and career development;

27 (N) Review special education services and programs
28 currently in Arkansas public charter schools and public charter schools
29 outside of Arkansas;

30 (O) Identify exemplary school district special education
31 programs in Arkansas and other states; and

32 (P) Review the research and findings of national
33 organizations that support students receiving special education services or
34 students participating in special education programs.

35 (3) For each item under subdivision (d)(2) of this section, the
36 task force shall consider the separate strengths and challenges for children

1 who:

2 (A) Are developmentally delayed;

3 (B) Have severe behavioral challenges; or

4 (C) Have severe physical disabilities.

5 (4)(A) The task force also shall review the financial support
6 provided for special education services and programs, including whether or
7 not the financial support provided is adequate to meet the needs of the
8 students in special education programs or receiving special education
9 services.

10 (B) The review under subdivision (d)(4)(A) shall include a
11 review of the financial practices of school districts in Arkansas for the
12 support of special education services and programs.

13 (e)(1) On or before February 1, 2016, the task force shall file with
14 the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President Pro
15 Tempore of the Senate, and the chairs of the House and Senate Committees on
16 Education a written, preliminary report of the task force's activities,
17 findings, and recommendations.

18 (2)(A) On or before September 1, 2016, the task force shall file
19 with the Governor, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the President
20 Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the chairs of the House Committee on Education
21 and Senate Committee on Education a written, final report of the task force's
22 activities, findings, and recommendations.

23 (B) The task force may file an updated final report on or
24 before July 1, 2017.

25 (f) The task force expires on July 1, 2017.

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