



S.J.R. 6

123rd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sen. Watts

BILL SUMMARY

- Approves proposed rule 3301-56-01 of the Administrative Code, regarding intervention procedures for school districts under an academic watch or in a state of academic emergency, as approved by the State Board of Education on September 15, 1998.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background

In 1997, the 122nd General Assembly enacted Am. Sub. S.B. 55, which established performance standards for school districts and required that each district be assigned a performance level based on the number of "performance standards" met. The categories of performance are "effective school district," "in need of continuous improvement," "under an academic watch," and "in a state of academic emergency." An *effective district* meets at least 94% of the state performance standards; a district *in need of continuous improvement* meets more than 50% but less than 94% of the standards; a district *under academic watch* meets 50% or fewer of the performance standards; and a district *in a state of academic emergency* meets only a third or fewer of the standards.

Section 3302.04 of the Revised Code directs that any district that is declared to be *under an academic watch* or *in a state of academic emergency* is subject to rules that require intervention. These rules must be recommended by the Department of Education and approved by joint resolution of the General Assembly. Proposed rule 3301-56-01 is the State Board's proposal for an intervention rule. The State Board conducted public hearings on the rule on May 12 and July 14, 1998. S.J.R. 6, if adopted, gives the General Assembly's approval of proposed rule 3301-56-01. (See **COMMENT.**)

Proposed rule 3301-56-01: Intervention procedures for academic watch and academic emergency districts

The rule requires that any district that is designated *in need of continuous improvement*, *academic watch*, or *academic emergency* must develop and implement a three-year continuous improvement plan. *Academic watch* and *academic emergency* districts must submit the plan to the Department of Education within 120 days of notification of the designation.

Continuous improvement plan

In its plan, a district board must adopt a mission statement that guides the educational program and establish an advisory panel. The advisory panel must include community leaders, parents, representatives of district programs and services, local businesses, vocational education planning districts, and local community organizations serving students and their families. The panel is to identify and analyze factors contributing to current performance, establish priorities for improvement, establish performance goals and benchmarks, and develop corrective actions. Presumably, the plan must contain all of these items.

Modifications

The Department of Education must require modifications to any continuous improvement plan that does not meet requirements set forth in the rule (see "Continuous improvement plan," above). Districts may, at any time, modify their plans and submit those modifications for approval by the Department.

Procedural requirements

The district board must conduct at least one public hearing before adopting the plan. *Academic watch* and *academic emergency* districts must submit to the Department written evidence of the Board of Education's approval of the plan and of the public hearing. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must direct an immediate site evaluation of any *academic watch* district that fails to submit its continuous improvement plan to the Department as required.

Plan to be followed for three years

Academic watch and *academic emergency* districts must implement their plans within 165 days after receiving their performance designations. An *academic watch* or *academic emergency* district that is redesignated to *continuous improvement* during the course of its three-year plan must continue to follow for the remainder of the three years, the rule's requirements for the designation that the district had at the time its plan was formulated.

Other requirements

Copies of the plan must be available to the public. Each *academic watch* and *academic emergency* district must establish a timeline and a process for implementing its continuous improvement plan including spending priorities, results of strategies, and reporting programs to the community.

Site evaluation

Academic watch and *academic emergency* districts must demonstrate minimum annual improvement until the district is redesignated as effective.¹ The Superintendent of Public Instruction may direct a site evaluation of any academic watch district that fails to meet satisfactory annual improvement targets for at least two consecutive years. The site evaluation will review conditions in the district or schools as well as the documentation and implementation of the plan. The Superintendent of Public Instruction may, based on the findings, appoint a school improvement guidance panel to direct an independent performance audit and provide for the revision of the plan as well as provide oversight and technical assistance for implementation of the plan. The panel will inform the Department and district board of its actions and the district's progress.

School improvement guidance panel

The Superintendent of Public Instruction must appoint a school improvement guidance panel if an *academic watch* or *academic emergency* district fails to meet specified requirements. These requirements, set forth in division (I) of proposed rule 3301-50-01, require school districts in *academic emergency* to improve to *academic watch* within five years; districts *under academic watch* to improve to *continuous improvement* within three years; and *continuous improvement* school districts improve to *effective districts* within five years. The Superintendent is responsible for directing the site evaluation, and based on the findings, appoint a school improvement guidance panel. The school improvement guidance panel must remain active in a district until it meets satisfactory annual improvement targets for two consecutive years, is redesignated as a *continuous improvement* district, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction approves a recommendation made by the district, a specialist, or the panel.²

¹ A standard unit of improvement, set forth in proposed rule 3301-50-01, is an increase in performance of 2.5% per year.

² It is unclear what range of recommendations could be made.

COMMENT

Although R.C. 3302.04 states that this proposed rule becomes effective upon approval of a joint resolution of the General Assembly, the rule is still subject to section 111.15 rule-making procedures. For the proposed rule to become effective, it must both be approved by a joint resolution and meet the 111.15 requirements. Under section 111.15, a rule becomes effective ten days after filing with JCARR.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	04-21-99	p. 331

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