



S.B. 36

125th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sens. Randy Gardner, Jacobson, Harris, Carey, Robert Gardner, Fedor, Austria, Hottinger, Stivers, Carnes, Mumper, Coughlin, Armbruster, Spada, Schuring

BILL SUMMARY

- Eliminates the requirement that school districts spend their parity aid payments on any specific activities and that the payments be aimed at strategies included in their improvement plans.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Currently, all school districts that are rated by the Department of Education as "in need of continuous improvement," "in a state of academic watch," or "in a state of academic emergency" must develop a continuous improvement plan that outlines strategies to improve performance.¹ These districts also must apply the full amount of their parity aid payments (if they get them) to one or more statutorily prescribed activities that are directed at implementing their continuous improvement plans.² Those prescribed activities are the following:

(1) Upgrading or purchasing additional classroom equipment, materials, textbooks, or technology;

¹ *R.C. 3302.04, not in the bill. The Department is required to rate the academic performance for each school district and school building annually based on performance indicators established by the State Board of Education. Currently, there are 22 indicators. As prescribed in the law, an "excellent" district meets at least 21 indicators, an "effective" district meets at least 17 but less than 21 indicators, a district "in need of continuous improvement" meets at least 11 but less than 17 indicators, an "academic watch" district meets at least 7 but less than 11 indicators, and an "academic emergency" district meets less than 7 indicators. (R.C. 3302.03, not in the bill.) In 2003, 300 of the 608 districts that were rated attained a rating of either excellent or effective.*

² *R.C. 3302.041.*

- (2) Lowering student/teacher ratios in additional classrooms;
- (3) Providing more advanced curriculum opportunities;
- (4) Providing additional electives or mandatory courses for graduation;
- (5) Increasing professional development;
- (6) Serving more students in all-day kindergarten;
- (7) Providing preschool to more students;
- (8) Providing additional programming and services for special student populations such as gifted, disadvantaged, or disabled students;
- (9) Establishing new academic intervention programs or increasing the number of students served in existing ones, including programs such as tutoring or summer school.

However, the Superintendent of Public Instruction may authorize a school district to spend parity aid payments for another purpose, upon request of the district, if the Superintendent finds that the proposed alternative use either would contribute to accomplishing other goals of the district's plan or is necessary to eliminate a threat to student health or safety.

The bill eliminates the requirement that school districts spend their parity aid payments on any specific activities and that the payments be aimed at strategies included in their improvement plans. It does not affect the calculation of or eligibility for parity aid, nor does it affect the requirement that the three types of lower-performing school districts develop improvement plans. (R.C. 3302.041, repealed.)

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-20-03	p. 137

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