Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Resolution Analysis

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S.C.R. 11

129th General Assembly
(As Reported by H. Education)

Sens. Lehner, Sawyer

RESOLUTION SUMMARY

- Approves the Department of Education's proposed changes to the state academic accountability system (1) to use a four-year and five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate and (2) to establish a graduation rate goal and annual targets toward that goal for determining if a school district or building makes adequate yearly progress.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background on legislative approval of NCLB-related changes

Current law requires the Ohio Department of Education to provide to each member of the House and Senate Education Committees a written description of any changes in implementation rules or policies of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) made by the U.S. Department of Education. If the Ohio Department of Education plans to change any of its policies or procedures regarding the state's implementation of NCLB based on changes in federal policies or rules, the Department must submit to each member of the Education Committees a written outline of the existing Ohio policy regarding that implementation and a written description of the changes the Department proposes to make. The Department may not make any of the proposed changes unless the General Assembly adopts a concurrent resolution approving them.[1]

Proposed policy changes

This resolution approves graduation rate changes to the state's NCLB accountability system for school districts and buildings that have been proposed by the

[1] R.C. 3302.09.

Ohio Department of Education. These changes are (1) to use the four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate mandated by the U.S. Department of Education, (2) to implement a five-year adjusted cohort graduation rate for students who do not graduate in the standard timeframe, and (3) to establish a graduation rate goal, and annual targets that reflect improvement toward that goal, for making decisions about whether a district or building makes the federal standard of adequate yearly progress (AYP).

In October 2008, the U.S. Department of Education promulgated regulations establishing a uniform measure of calculating the high school graduation rate for all states to use.[2] This measure, known as the "four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate," is the number of students who graduate in four years with a regular high school diploma divided by the number of students who entered high school four years earlier. It is adjusted to account for students who transfer to another school district or building, emigrate to another country, or are deceased. States must begin reporting the new graduation rate, both in the aggregate and disaggregated by student subgroups, on the district and building report cards issued for the 2010-2011 school year, which Ohio published in August 2011.

Beginning with the 2011-2012 school year, states must use the new graduation rate to determine if a district or building makes AYP. For this purpose, states must set a single graduation rate goal that all districts and buildings are expected to meet and annual targets toward attaining the goal. A district or building, in order to make AYP, must either meet the graduation rate goal or demonstrate continuous improvement from prior school years by meeting the annual targets. Upon approval by the U.S. Department of Education, states may use extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rates, in addition to the four-year rate, for AYP determinations. The extended-year rates are intended to give states credit for students who take longer than four years to complete high school.

State Board action

On January 12, 2010, the State Board of Education adopted a resolution recommending an extended-year adjusted cohort graduation rate of five years, a graduation rate goal, and annual graduation rate targets. These proposals are awaiting approval by the U.S. Department of Education.

[2] 34 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) 200.19.

Background on AYP

AYP is calculated for school districts and individual public school buildings. Within each district and building, student performance data must be disaggregated by (1) major racial and ethnic groups, (2) students with disabilities, (3) economically disadvantaged students, and (4) limited English proficient students. To make AYP, a district or building generally must (1) have at least 95% of its students participate in the state achievement assessments in English language arts and math, (2) meet the state's annual targets for passage rates on the assessments for its total student population and for each of the required subgroups, and (3) meet the state's designated level of performance on one or more other academic indicators. For high schools, graduation rate is a required academic indicator.[3]

Sanctions for failure to make AYP

Under NCLB and state law, school districts and buildings that do not make AYP for two or more consecutive years are subject to sanctions.[4] The Ohio Department of Education's Model of Differentiated Accountability specifies these sanctions. Under the model, sanctions are tailored based on the degree to which a district or building has failed to make AYP. The model places districts and buildings in one of three groups based on whether they need a low, medium, or high level of support. Placement is determined by the aggregate percentage of AYP indicators that have been missed. Districts and buildings that miss a higher percentage of AYP indicators face more numerous and rigorous corrective actions than those that miss a lower percentage. Depending on the level of support designated for a district or building, required corrective actions may include the creation of district or building needs assessments, the establishment of district and building leadership teams, or on-site reviews by a state diagnostic team. Additionally, buildings that receive federal Title I funds for at-risk students must allow students to transfer to another public school and must provide supplemental educational services, such as tutoring or remediation.

Report card ratings

Although not required by NCLB, Ohio uses its report cards to assign performance ratings to districts and buildings. Districts and buildings receive a rating of excellent, effective, continuous improvement, academic watch, or academic emergency. These ratings are based on four components:

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[3] 20 United States Code (U.S.C.) 6311(b)(2); see also 34 C.F.R. 200.20.

[4] 20 U.S.C. 6316 and R.C. 3302.041.

(1) Whether the district or building meets performance indicators established by the State Board of Education;

(2) A "performance index score," which measures improved performance on the achievement assessments by students scoring at all levels;

(3) Whether the district or building makes AYP; and

(4) A "value-added progress dimension," which tracks the amount of a student's academic growth attributable to a particular district or building.[5]

AYP may be a significant factor in the rating system under certain conditions. For example, a district or building that makes AYP cannot be rated lower than continuous improvement, regardless of its performance on the other components of the system. Conversely, if an otherwise excellent or effective district or building misses AYP for the same two or more subgroups for three consecutive years, its rating is lowered one level.[6]

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	05-19-11
Reported, S. Education	06-21-11
Adopted Senate (33-0)	06-21-11
Reported, H. Education	01-26-12

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[5] R.C. 3302.021(A) and 3302.03(A).

[6] R.C. 3302.03(B).