



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

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Am. H.B. 342

130th General Assembly
(As Reported by H. Education)

Reps. Brenner, Driehaus, Bishoff

BILL SUMMARY

- Permits an educational service center (ESC) to be a partner and the lead applicant in an education consortium seeking a grant under the Straight A Program.
 - Modifies the goals of a project for which a grant under the Straight A Program may be awarded.
 - Removes a duty of the Auditor of State to determine if an applicant fails to implement a grant agreement entered into with the Straight A governing board.
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CONTENT AND OPERATION

Straight A Program

H.B. 59 of the 130th General Assembly created, for fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the Straight A Program to provide grants to school districts, educational service centers (ESCs), community schools, STEM schools, college-preparatory boarding schools, individual school buildings, education consortia (which may represent a partnership among school districts, school buildings, community schools, or STEM schools), institutions of higher education, and private entities partnering with one or more of those educational entities. The grants are for projects that aim to achieve significant advancement in one or more of the following goals: (1) student achievement, (2) spending reduction in the five year fiscal forecast, and (3) utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom. The bill makes modifications to that program.

First, the bill specifically permits an ESC to be a partner in an education consortium that may receive a Straight A grant.¹ The bill also allows an ESC to be the lead applicant of an education consortium on a grant application.²

Second, the bill modifies the goals of a project for which a grant may be awarded. Under current law, as noted above, one goal is "student achievement." The bill changes that goal to be "increased" student achievement and, in the case of an ESC, increased student achievement in the ESC's client school districts.³ (A "client school district" is defined in current law as a school district that has entered into an agreement to receive any services from an ESC.⁴) Further, to the second listed goal regarding spending reduction in a district's five-year fiscal forecast, the bill adds, as an alternative, "positive performance on other fiscal measures" established by the Straight A governing board.⁵ The bill also clarifies that the third listed goal for utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom be in classrooms operated by the educational entity or by an ESC's client school districts.⁶ Finally, the bill adds as a new goal the "use of a shared services delivery model that demonstrates increased efficiency and effectiveness, long-term sustainability, and scalability."⁷

Third, the bill removes a duty of the Auditor of State to determine if a Straight A grant applicant fails to implement a grant agreement entered into with the Straight A governing board. Under continuing law, upon deciding to award a grant to an applicant, the governing board must enter into an agreement with the applicant. The agreement must include, among other things, a provision specifying that funding will be returned to the governing board if the applicant fails to implement the agreement. Under current law, removed by the bill, the Auditor of State determines if the grant applicant fails to implement the agreement.⁸ The bill does not specify who must make such a determination but, presumably, that matter could be described in the agreement itself.

¹ Division (A) of Section 263.325 of Am. Sub. H.B. 59 of the 130th General Assembly.

² Division (C) of Section 263.325.

³ Division (A)(1) of Section 263.325.

⁴ R.C. 3311.0510, not in the bill.

⁵ Division (A)(2) of Section 263.325.

⁶ Division (A)(3) of Section 263.325.

⁷ Division (A)(4) of Section 263.325.

⁸ Division (E)(5) of Section 263.325.



Background on ESCs

ESCs are regional public entities that offer a broad spectrum of services, including curriculum development, professional development, purchasing, human resources, special education services, and counseling services, to school districts and community schools in their regions. Each ESC is under the oversight of its own elected governing board. The territory from which the members of an ESC's governing board are elected is the combined territory of the "local" school districts in the county or counties of the ESC's service area. It does not include the territory of the "city" and "exempted village" school districts the ESC might serve.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	11-07-13
Reported, H. Education	12-05-13

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