House Engrossed

FILED

JANICE K. BREWER
SECRETARY OF STATE

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Forty-sixth Legislature
Second Regular Session
2004

CHAPTER 34

HOUSE BILL 2353

AN ACT

AMENDING SECTION 15-241, ARIZONA REVISED STATUTES; RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Arizona:

Section 1. Section 15-241, Arizona Revised Statutes, is amended to read:

15-241. School accountability; schools failing to meet academic standards; failing schools tutoring fund

A. The department of education shall compile an annual achievement profile for each public school.

B. Each school shall submit to the department any data that is required and requested and that is necessary to compile the achievement profile. A school that fails to submit the information that is necessary is not eligible to receive monies from the classroom site fund established by section 15-977.

C. The department shall establish a baseline achievement profile for each school by October 15, 2001. The baseline achievement profile shall be used to determine a standard measurement of acceptable academic progress for each school and a school classification pursuant to subsection G of this section. Any disclosure of educational records compiled by the department of education pursuant to this section shall comply with the family educational and privacy rights act of 1974 (20 United States Code section 1232g).

D. The achievement profile for schools that offer instruction in kindergarten programs and grades one through eight, or any combination of those programs or grades, shall include the following school academic performance indicators:

1. The Arizona measure of academic progress. The department shall compute the ~~percentage of pupils enrolled in the school for at least one academic year who have achieved one year of academic progress.~~ EXTENT OF ACADEMIC PROGRESS MADE BY THE PUPILS IN EACH SCHOOL DURING THE COURSE OF EACH YEAR.

2. The Arizona instrument to measure standards test. The department shall compute the percentage of pupils who meet or exceed the standard on the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, as prescribed by the state board of education.

E. The achievement profile for schools that offer instruction in grades nine through twelve, or any combination of those grades, shall include the following school academic performance indicators:

1. The Arizona instrument to measure standards test. The department shall compute the percentage of pupils pursuant to subsection F of this section who meet or exceed the standard on the Arizona instrument to measure standards test, as prescribed by the state board of education.

2. The annual dropout rate.

3. The annual graduation rate.

F. Subject to final adoption by the state board of education, the department shall determine the criteria for each school classification using a research based methodology. The methodology shall include the performance

of pupils at all achievement levels, account for pupil mobility, account for the distribution of pupil achievement at each school and include longitudinal indicators of academic performance. For the purposes of this subsection, "research based methodology" means the systematic and objective application of statistical and quantitative research principles to determine a standard measurement of acceptable academic progress for each school.

G. The achievement profile shall be used to determine a school classification that designates each school as one of the following:

1. An excelling school.
2. A highly performing school.
3. A performing school.
4. An underperforming school.
5. A school failing to meet academic standards.

H. The classification for each school and the criteria used to determine classification pursuant to subsection F of this section shall be included on the school report card prescribed in section 15-746.

I. Subject to final adoption by the state board of education, the department of education shall develop a parallel achievement profile for accommodation schools, alternative schools as defined by the state board of education and schools with a student count of fewer than one hundred pupils.

J. If a school is designated as an underperforming school, within ninety days after receiving notice of the designation, the governing board shall develop an improvement plan for the school, submit a copy of the plan to the superintendent of public instruction and supervise the implementation of the plan. The plan shall include necessary components as identified by the state board of education. Within thirty days after submitting the improvement plan to the superintendent of public instruction, the governing board shall hold a special public meeting in each school that has been designated as an underperforming school and shall present the respective improvement plans that have been developed for each school. The school district governing board, within thirty days of receiving notice of the designation, shall provide written notification of the classification to each residence within the attendance area of the school. The notice shall explain the improvement plan process and provide information regarding the public meeting required by this subsection.

K. A school that has not submitted an improvement plan pursuant to subsection J of this section is not eligible to receive monies from the classroom site fund established by section 15-977 for every day that a plan has not been received by the superintendent of public instruction within the time specified in subsection J of this section plus an additional ninety days. The state board of education shall require the superintendent of the school district to testify before the board and explain the reasons that an improvement plan for that school has not been submitted.

L. If a charter school is designated as an underperforming school, within thirty days the school shall notify the parents of the students

attending the school of the classification. The notice shall explain the improvement plan process and provide information regarding the public meeting required by this subsection. Within ninety days of receiving the classification, the charter holder shall present an improvement plan to the charter sponsor at a public meeting and submit a copy of the plan to the superintendent of public instruction. The improvement plan shall include necessary components as identified by the state board of education. For every day that an improvement plan is not received by the superintendent of public instruction, the school is not eligible to receive monies from the classroom site fund established by section 15-977 for ninety days plus every day that a plan is not received. The charter holder shall appear before the sponsoring board and explain why the improvement plan has not been submitted.

M. The department of education shall establish an appeals process, to be approved by the state board of education, for a school to appeal data used to determine the achievement profile of the school. The criteria established shall be based on mitigating factors and may include a visit to the school site by the department of education.

N. If a school remains classified as an underperforming school for a third consecutive year, the department of education shall visit the school site to confirm the classification data and to review the implementation of the school's improvement plan. The school shall be classified as failing to meet academic standards unless an alternate classification is made AFTER AN APPEAL pursuant to subsection M of this section.

O. The school district governing board, within thirty days of receiving notice of the school failing to meet academic standards classification, shall provide written notification of the classification to each residence in the attendance area of the school. The notice shall explain the improvement plan process and provide information regarding the public meeting required by subsection R of this section.

P. The superintendent of public instruction, based on need, shall assign a solutions team to an underperforming school or a school failing to meet academic standards comprised of master teachers, fiscal analysts and curriculum assessment experts who are certified by the state board of education as Arizona academic standards technicians. The department of education may hire or contract with administrators, principals and teachers who have demonstrated experience with the characteristics and situations in an underperforming school or a school failing to meet academic standards and may use these personnel as part of the solutions team. The team shall work with staff at the school to assist in curricula alignment and shall instruct teachers on how to increase pupil academic progress, considering the school's achievement profile. The team shall select two master teachers to be employed by the school. The solutions team shall consider the existing improvement plan to assess the need for changes to curriculum, professional development and resource allocation.

Q. The parent or the guardian of the pupil may apply, either to the school district or the department of education, in a manner determined by the department of education for reimbursement from the failing schools tutoring fund established by this section. The school may apply to the state board of education for grants from the funds provided pursuant to section 42-5029, subsection E, paragraph 7 to provide supplemental instruction. Pupils attending a school designated as an underperforming school or a school failing to meet academic standards may select an alternative tutoring program in academic standards from a provider that is certified by the state board of education. To qualify, the provider must guarantee in writing a stated level of academic improvement for the pupil that includes a timeline for improvement that is agreed to by the parent or guardian of the pupil and the provider shall agree to refund to the state the standards assistance grant monies if the guaranteed level of academic improvement is not met.

R. Within sixty days of receiving notification of designation as a school failing to meet academic standards, the school district governing board shall evaluate needed changes to the existing improvement plan for the school, consider recommendations from the solutions team, submit a copy of the plan to the superintendent of public instruction and supervise the implementation of the plan. Within thirty days after submitting the improvement plan to the superintendent of public instruction, the governing board shall hold a public meeting in each school that has been designated as a school failing to meet academic standards and shall present the respective improvement plans that have been developed for each school.

S. A school that has not submitted an improvement plan pursuant to subsection R of this section is not eligible to receive monies from the classroom site fund established by section 15-977 for every day that a plan has not been received by the superintendent of public instruction within the time specified in subsection R of this section plus an additional ninety days. The state board of education shall require the superintendent of the school district to testify before the board and explain the reasons that an improvement plan for that school has not been submitted.

T. If a charter school is designated as a school failing to meet academic standards, the department of education shall immediately notify the charter school's sponsor. The charter school's sponsor shall either take action to restore the charter school to acceptable performance or revoke the charter school's charter. Within thirty days the school shall notify the parents of the students attending the school of the classification and of any pending public meetings to review the issue.

U. A school that has been designated as a school failing to meet academic standards shall be evaluated by the department of education to determine if the school failed to properly implement its school improvement plan, the alignment of the curriculum with academic standards, teacher training, budget prioritization or other proven strategies to improve academic performance. After visiting the school site pursuant to subsection

~~M~~ N of this section, the department of education shall submit to the state board of education a recommendation to proceed pursuant to subsections P, Q and R of this section or that the school be subject to a public hearing to determine if the school failed to properly implement its improvement plan and the reasons for the department's recommendation.

V. If the department does recommend a public hearing, the state board of education shall meet and may provide by a majority vote at the public hearing for the continued operation of the school as allowed by this subsection. The state board of education shall determine whether governmental, nonprofit and private organizations may submit applications to the state board to fully or partially manage the school. The state board's determination shall include:

1. If and to what extent the local governing board may participate in the operation of the school including personnel matters.

2. If and to what extent the state board of education shall participate in the operation of the school.

3. Resource allocation pursuant to subsection X of this section.

4. Provisions for the development and submittal of a school improvement plan to be presented in a public meeting at the school.

5. A suggested time frame for the alternative operation of the school.

W. The state board shall periodically review the status of a school that is operated by an organization other than the school district governing board to determine whether the operation of the school should be returned to the school district governing board. Before the state board makes a determination, the state board or its designee shall meet with the school district governing board or its designee to determine the time frame, operational considerations and the appropriate continuation of existing improvements that are necessary to assure a smooth transition of authority from the other organization back to the school district governing board.

X. If an alternative operation plan is provided pursuant to subsection V of this section, the state board of education shall pay for the operation of the school and shall adjust the school district's student count pursuant to section 15-902, soft capital allocation pursuant to section 15-962, capital outlay revenue limit pursuant to section 15-961, base support level pursuant to section 15-943, monies distributed from the classroom site fund established in section 15-977 and transportation support level pursuant to section 15-945 to accurately reflect any reduction in district services that are no longer provided to that school by the district. The state board of education may modify the school district's revenue control limit, the district support level and THE general budget limit calculated pursuant to section 15-947 by an amount that corresponds to this reduction in services. The state board of education shall retain the portion of state aid that would otherwise be due the school district for the school and shall distribute that portion of state aid directly to the organization that contracts with the state board of education to operate the school.

Y. If the state board of education determines that a charter school failed to properly implement its improvement plan, the sponsor of the charter school shall revoke the charter school's charter.

Z. If there are more than two schools in a district and more than one-half, or in any case more than five, OF THE schools in the district are designated as schools failing to meet academic standards for more than two consecutive years, in the next election of members of the governing board the election ballot shall contain the following statement immediately above the listing of governing board candidates:

> Within the last five years, (number of schools) schools in the _____ school district have been designated as "schools failing to meet academic standards" by the superintendent of public instruction.

AA. At least twice each year the department of education shall publish in a newspaper of general circulation in each county of this state a list of schools that are designated as schools failing to meet academic standards.

BB. The failing schools tutoring fund is established consisting of monies collected pursuant to section 42-5029, subsection E as designated for this purpose. The department of education shall administer the fund.

APPROVED BY THE GOVERNOR APRIL 1, 2004.

FILED IN THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE APRIL 1, 2004.