

1 State of Arkansas
2 84th General Assembly
3 Second Extraordinary Session, 2003
4

A Bill

Call Item 4

HOUSE BILL 1088

5 By: Representatives Pickett, Cleveland, Roebuck
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7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO CREATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE TEAMS FOR
10 SCHOOLS IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT; TO ALLOW THE STATE
11 BOARD OF EDUCATION TO INTERVENE WHEN NECESSARY TO
12 RESTORE SAFETY AND AN ORDERLY LEARNING
13 ENVIRONMENT IN A SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
14

Subtitle

15 AN ACT TO CREATE EDUCATION ASSISTANCE
16 TEAMS FOR SCHOOLS IN SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT.
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20 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
21

22 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, Subchapter 4 is amended
23 to add an additional section to read as follows:

24 6-15-433. Academic assistance teams.

25 (a) In accordance with §§ 6-15-1901 through 6-15-1915, the
26 accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor,
27 shall create education assistance teams to provide public schools in school
28 improvement status under § 6-15-425 with additional resources to evaluate the
29 school and to provide services that will improve the education of children in
30 the school.
31

32 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, is amended to add an
33 additional subchapter to read as follows:

34 6-15-1801. Safe and orderly schools.

35 (a)(1) A local school board may request the State Board of Education
36 to help restore safety and an orderly learning environment at a school.



1 (2) The local school board shall file a copy of the request with
 2 the state board.

3 (b) The state board may provide an education assistance team as
 4 provided under this chapter to a school in order to promote or restore safety
 5 and an orderly learning environment at a school if the local school board or
 6 the superintendent requests that the state board provide an assistance team
 7 to the school and the state board determines that the school needs
 8 assistance.

9 (c)(1) If an education assistance team is assigned to a school under
 10 this section, the team shall spend a sufficient amount of time at the school
 11 to:

12 (A) Assess the problems at the school;

13 (B) Assist school personnel with resolving those problems;

14 and

15 (C) Work with school personnel and others to develop a
 16 long-term plan for restoring and maintaining safety and an orderly learning
 17 environment at the school.

18 (2)(A) The education assistance team shall also make
 19 recommendations to the local school board and the superintendent on the
 20 actions of the local school board and the superintendent should consider
 21 taking steps to resolve problems at the school.

22 (B) The recommendations shall be in writing and are public
 23 record.

24 (d) If an assistance team is assigned to a school under this section,
 25 the powers given to the state board and the powers given under this chapter
 26 shall apply as if the school had been identified as a school in school
 27 improvement status under this chapter, except in cases in which the
 28 Department of Education and the school agree that the request is a preemptive
 29 intervention to address emerging disciplinary concerns.

30
 31 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 15, is amended to add an
 32 additional subchapter to read as follows:

33 6-15-1901. Education assistance teams – Creation.

34 (a) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
 35 successor, shall create education assistance teams to provide public schools
 36 in school improvement status under § 6-15-425 with additional resources to

1 evaluate the school and to provide services that will improve the education
2 of children in the school.

3 (b) The education assistance teams shall consist of the following
4 members:

- 5 (1) Currently practicing teachers and staff;
- 6 (2) Representatives of higher education;
- 7 (3) School administrators; and
- 8 (4) Others that the accountability section of the Department of
9 Education, or its successor, considers to be appropriate.

10 (c) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
11 successor, shall ensure that each team member possesses a high degree of
12 knowledge and skill in the following areas:

- 13 (1) School leadership;
- 14 (2) Curriculum and instruction;
- 15 (3) Classroom management and discipline;
- 16 (4) Academic assessment;
- 17 (5) Home-school relations; and
- 18 (6) Evaluation and research.

19 (d)(1) Team members shall have the following qualifications:

20 (A) Either:

21 (i) Be certified in elementary or middle school
22 education to serve on an education assistance team at the grades kindergarten
23 through eight (K-8) level; or

24 (ii) Have teaching experience in either English,
25 mathematics, social studies, science, or grades kindergarten through twelve
26 (K-12) reading to serve on an education assistance team at the high school
27 level;

28 (B) At least four (4) years of successful experience in
29 classroom instruction in reading, writing, and mathematics, or in the
30 appropriate content area for high school.

31 (2) Preference is given to applicants whose performance has been
32 recognized as exemplary.

33
34 6-15-1902. Education assistance teams – Duties.

35 Education assistance teams shall:

- 36 (1) Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of all facets of

1 the school;

2 (2)(A) Evaluate teachers and administrators;

3 (B) When evaluating teachers and administrators the
 4 education assistance team may make recommendations of ways for teachers and
 5 administrators to improve classroom instruction or school administration,
 6 including, but not limited to, recommending specific professional development
 7 objectives which may include requiring the teacher or administrator to obtain
 8 additional course work in subjects taught or administration duties;

9 (3) Collaborate with the school's faculty and staff to revise
 10 and assist with the implementation of the school improvement plan, as
 11 necessary;

12 (4) Make recommendations for continuous improvement as the plan
 13 is implemented;

14 (5) Review the school's progress; and

15 (6) Make appropriate progress reports to the following:

16 (A) Superintendent;

17 (B) Local school board;

18 (C) State Board of Education; and

19 (D) The accountability section of the Department of
 20 Education, or its successor.

21
 22 6-15-1903. Education assistance teams – Comprehensive needs
 23 assessment.

24 (a) The education assistance teams shall:

25 (1) Review and investigate all facets of the school and school
 26 operations; and

27 (2) Assist in developing recommendations for improving student
 28 performance.

29 (b) Information about the school may be gathered by using any of the
 30 following:

31 (1) Surveys;

32 (2) Classroom observations;

33 (3) Questionnaires;

34 (4) Focus group interviews with students, parents, staff, or
 35 community members;

36 (5) Historical student achievement data and goal summaries;

- 1 (6) Previous school improvement plans;
- 2 (7) Student promotion data;
- 3 (8) Attendance, discipline, and school violence reports;
- 4 (9) Dropout data; and
- 5 (10) Other data as may be available and relevant.

6 (c) A comprehensive review shall include, but is not limited to, the
 7 following:

- 8 (1) Curricula and program offerings;
- 9 (2) Instruction and scheduling;
- 10 (3) Student services;
- 11 (4) School and community relations;
- 12 (5) School climates;
- 13 (6) Achievement results;
- 14 (7) Staff development opportunities;
- 15 (8) School improvement planning process;
- 16 (9) School-based management practices; and
- 17 (10) Human and fiscal resources.

18 (d) Once the education assistance team and the school improvement team
 19 have carefully reviewed all available data, the assistance team will
 20 recommend specific actions that will improve student achievement at the
 21 school.

22

23 6-15-1904. Education assistance teams – Teacher and administrator
 24 evaluation - Collaboration.

25 (a) The education assistance teams shall evaluate at least
 26 semiannually the following personnel at the low-performing school and make
 27 findings and recommendations concerning their performances:

- 28 (1) The principal;
- 29 (2) The classroom teachers; and
- 30 (3) Other personnel.

31 (b) The education assistance team shall collaborate with the school
 32 staff, the superintendent, the administration, and the local school board to
 33 design, implement, and monitor a school improvement plan that, if fully
 34 implemented, can be expected to alleviate the targeted problems and improve
 35 student performance.

36 (c) After a comprehensive review of the school, the education

1 assistance team will work collaboratively with the superintendent and the
2 administration to determine and prioritize needs, plan appropriate
3 strategies, address the identified needs, and develop the school improvement
4 plan.

5
6 6-15-1905. Education assistance teams – Recommendations for
7 improvement – Review progress – Report progress.

8 (a)(1) The education assistance team shall make recommendations as the
9 school develops and implements the school improvement plan.

10 (2) The team and the school staff may accept the school’s
11 original plan or develop a new, more focused plan.

12 (3) Continuous assessment of the school improvement plan and the
13 progress of the school improvement plan is required.

14 (4) The team and the school staff shall identify areas of the
15 plan for adjustment.

16 (5) The plan may be modified as necessary to serve as a working
17 guide for the school improvement process.

18 (b)(1) The education assistance team shall review the school’s
19 progress under the school improvement plan.

20 (2) The review should include an analysis of student
21 achievement.

22 (3) The review should be conducted monthly.

23 (c)(1) The education assistance team shall report, as appropriate, to
24 the local school board of each community and the State Board of Education on
25 the school’s progress.

26 (2) Monthly reports shall be submitted by education assistance
27 team leaders to the accountability section of the Department of Education, or
28 its successor.

29 (3) The progress reports shall be provided to the principal and
30 the staff of the school, the superintendent, and the local school board
31 chairperson.

32 (4) The progress reports to the state board shall include the
33 following information:

34 (A) The identified challenges and needs;

35 (B) Recommendations; and

36 (C) The level of cooperation exhibited by the principal,

1 school staff, and the superintendent.

2 (d)(1) The education assistance team shall provide feedback to the
 3 low-performing school at least monthly.

4 (2) The monthly report shall include a status report on
 5 benchmarks, findings, and recommendations.

6
 7 6-15-1906. Education assistance teams – Vacated school improvement
 8 plans – Evaluations.

9 (a) The education assistance team may determine that a low-performing
 10 school’s five-year education plan developed under this chapter is impeding
 11 student performance at the school.

12 (b) If this determination is made, the education assistance team may
 13 recommend to the local school board that it vacate the relevant portions of
 14 the school improvement plan and direct the low-performing school to revise
 15 the portions of the plan that are no longer appropriate.

16 (c)(1) The education assistance team is responsible for continuous
 17 evaluation of the school’s improvement and for working with the school
 18 improvement team to ensure that the plan is current and accurately reflects
 19 the goals and objectives of the school.

20 (2) On rare occasions, the assistance team and the school
 21 improvement team may have a difference of opinion on the relevance of the
 22 plan.

23 (3) If that disagreement cannot be resolved at the school level,
 24 the assistance team may request assistance from the local school board.

25 (4) The local school board shall adopt a plan that is in the
 26 best interest of the children in that school, including strategies that have
 27 the greatest impact on student achievement.

28
 29 6-15-1907. Education assistance teams – Schools showing lack of
 30 progress.

31 (a) If a school fails to improve student performance after assistance
 32 is provided under this chapter, the education assistance team may recommend
 33 that assistance continue, or that the State Board of Education take further
 34 action against the school district under this chapter.

35 (b) If more than two (2) of the schools in a school district are in
 36 school improvement status, the state board has the authority under this

1 chapter to:

2 (1) Terminate the contracts of the superintendent, principals,
3 assistant principals, and any other administrative personnel;

4 (2) Appoint an interim administration of the school district; or

5 (3) Suspend the powers and duties of the local school board.

6
7 6-15-1908. Education assistance teams – Compensation and composition.

8 (a)(1) The members of the education assistance teams who are teachers
9 and administrators shall be compensated and shall receive employment benefits
10 for twelve (12) months.

11 (2) The compensated team members shall serve a minimum of one
12 (1) full school year.

13 (b) The compensated members shall assist designated public schools in
14 school improvement status.

15 (c) Typical teams will have five (5) members and will, whenever
16 possible, include educators from the same geographic area of the school that
17 is in school improvement status.

18
19 6-15-1909. Education assistance team members – Training.

20 Training for education assistance team members shall include the
21 following:

22 (1) Effective intrapersonal, interpersonal, and communication
23 skills;

24 (2) School leadership;

25 (3) Curriculum and instruction;

26 (4) Classroom management and discipline;

27 (5) Academic assessment;

28 (6) Home-school relations; and

29 (7) Evaluation and research.

30
31 6-15-1910. Education assistance team members – Procedures for hiring.

32 (a) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its
33 successor, shall use the following selection process:

34 (1)(A) Applicants submit the application information to the
35 accountability section of the Department of Education.

36 (B) Application information is screened to determine which

1 candidates meet qualifications;

2 (2) Qualified applicants are contacted for an interview which
 3 will be no less than one and one-half (1 1/2) hours in length; and

4 (3) Following the interview, applicants provide an on-demand
 5 writing sample in which the applicant will have thirty (30) minutes to
 6 complete.

7 (b)(1) For applicants who meet the qualifications under this section,
 8 a reference check is conducted.

9 (2) At least one (1) reference must be the applicant's current
 10 education supervisor.

11 (c)(1) The final step in selection for team leaders is a classroom
 12 observation by a staff member from the accountability section of the
 13 Department of Education, or its successor.

14 (2) Qualified applicants will be given a time frame in which the
 15 observation will occur.

16 (d) Qualified applicants who are selected will be notified within two
 17 (2) months after completing the process under this section.

18
 19 6-15-1911. Education assistance team members – Required application
 20 information.

21 (a) The following information shall be included in each application
 22 for an education assistance team member:

23 (1) A letter of interest;

24 (2) A statement of commitment;

25 (3) A resume that includes educational background and work
 26 experience;

27 (4) A summary of licensure areas, with an attached copy of
 28 current teaching license;

29 (5)(A) A list of professional development that the applicant has
 30 completed or conducted in the last five (5) years.

31 (B) The list shall include the name of the activity,
 32 number of participants, method of delivery, and level;

33 (6) A list of three (3) personal references;

34 (7) A list of three (3) professional references who are not
 35 related to the applicant;

36 (8) A copy of the applicant's student test scores for the last

1 three (3) years, or for each year that the applicant has been at his or her
2 current school; and

3 (9) Any additional requirements that the State Board of
4 Education, or the accountability section of the Department of Education, or
5 its successor, deem necessary.

6 (b) The accountability section of the Department of Education shall
7 promulgate rules under this section and develop all forms necessary under
8 this section.

9
10 6-15-1912. Education assistance team leaders – Job description.

11 (a) An education assistance team leader shall assist public schools in
12 school improvement status in achieving their performance goals.

13 (b) An education assistance team leader shall have expertise in the
14 administration and supervision of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

15 (c) A minimum of one (1) calendar year of service is required.

16
17 6-15-1913. Education assistance team leaders – Required credentials.

18 The minimum required credentials for an education assistance team
19 leader are as follows:

20 (1) An advanced degree or certification in administration and
21 supervision;

22 (2) Four (4) years of demonstrated excellence in teaching or
23 administration; and

24 (3) A proven track record of success in working with students at
25 public schools in school improvement status or with underachieving students
26 and a proven track record in improving performance of those students.

27
28 6-15-1914. Education assistance team leaders – Duties.

29 (a) An educational assistance team leader shall have the following
30 duties under this subchapter:

31 (1) Assist public schools in school improvement status in
32 achieving their growth and performance goals in reading, writing, and
33 mathematics;

34 (2) Coordinate and conduct a comprehensive school review or
35 needs assessment to include the following:

36 (A) Observing the school environment;

- 1 (B) Conferencing with key personnel;
- 2 (C) Determining the school's strengths; and
- 3 (D) Determining the areas in need of improvement at the
- 4 school;

5 (3) Create positive rapport with staff to build a long-term,

6 focused partnership;

7 (4) Provide feedback on the school improvement plan;

8 (5) Assist in determining, coordinating, and delivering needed

9 professional development;

10 (6) Support team members in the application of effective

11 instructional practices;

12 (7) Analyze disaggregated test data for school improvement;

13 (8) Collaborate with school administrators to provide formative

14 and summative observations;

15 (9) Coordinate the team's activities;

16 (10) Review, compile, and write reports of the school's

17 performance results; and

18 (11) Work cooperatively with other team members and staff from

19 the school, the accountability section of the Department of Education, or its

20 successor.

21 (b) The accountability section of the Department of Education, or its

22 successor, or the State Board of Education may add other duties by policy or

23 rules.

24

25 6-15-1915. Education assistance team leaders – Training.

26 (a) In addition to expertise and experience as classroom teachers or

27 administrators, education assistance team leaders shall also receive

28 extensive training, provided through the Department of Education or the

29 accountability section of the Department of Education, or its successor, to

30 prepare them to help public schools in school improvement status improve

31 achievement.

32 (b)(1) Education assistance team leaders shall be provided with four

33 (4) weeks of formal training as well as supplemental training.

34 (2) Topics for training include, but are not limited to, the

35 following:

36 (A) The law in this subchapter and any related policy and

- 1 rules;
- 2 (B) Other applicable Arkansas school law;
- 3 (C) The school improvement planning process;
- 4 (D) Developing a school improvement plan;
- 5 (E) Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment;
- 6 (F) Team-building instruction;
- 7 (G) Applying the code of conduct;
- 8 (H) Continuous assessment and improvement;
- 9 (I) Effective curriculum and instructional issues and
 10 strategies and best practices;
- 11 (J) Bringing about systemic change;
- 12 (K) Team and school relations;
- 13 (L) Home and school relations;
- 14 (M) Staff development;
- 15 (N) Personnel evaluation;
- 16 (O) Analyzing and reporting data;
- 17 (P) Media relations;
- 18 (Q) Application of learning using a case study of a public
 19 school in school improvement status;
- 20 (R) Exceptional children issues and programs;
- 21 (S) Early childhood initiatives;
- 22 (T) Mediation and facilitation;
- 23 (U) Mentoring;
- 24 (V) Media and technology resources; and
- 25 (W) Accountability and the testing program.

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