

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1733

5 By: Representatives Joey Carr, Tosh
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For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE ARKANSAS
10 CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS BETTER CHANCE PROGRAM
11 ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

15 TO AMEND VARIOUS PROVISIONS OF THE
16 ARKANSAS CODE CONCERNING THE ARKANSAS
17 BETTER CHANCE PROGRAM ACT.
18

19 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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21 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-45-104(a)(2), concerning the requirement
22 of a local school to work with the Division of Elementary and Secondary
23 Education to develop an Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program in
24 certain circumstances, is amended to read as follows:

25 (2) A local school is required to work with the Division of
26 Elementary and Secondary Education and its local community to establish,
27 promote, and assist in the development of a program under the Arkansas Better
28 Chance for School Success Program to serve all children in the school as
29 provided in ~~§ 6-45-108~~ § 6-45-105, if the school is located in a school
30 district classified as in need of Level 5 – Intensive support.
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32 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-45-105 is amended to read as follows:

33 6-45-105. Establishment of Arkansas Better Chance Program – Arkansas
34 Better Chance for School Success Program.

35 (a)(1)(A) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
36 establish the Arkansas Better Chance Program to assist in the establishment



1 and funding of the appropriate early childhood programs for children from
2 birth through five (5) years of age.

3 (B) Within the Arkansas Better Chance Program there is
4 established the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program for
5 providing appropriate early care and education programs for children ~~three~~
6 ~~(3) years of age and four (4) years of age as identified under § 6-45-108(a)~~
7 from birth through five (5) years of age.

8 (C) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
9 shall establish the same criteria and qualifications for eligibility to
10 participate in the Arkansas Better Chance Program and the Arkansas Better
11 Chance for School Success Program.

12 (D) A child from birth through five (5) years of age who
13 meets at least one (1) of the following qualifications shall be eligible to
14 participate in the Arkansas Better Chance Program or the Arkansas Better
15 Chance for School Success Program:

16 (i) The child has a family gross income not
17 exceeding two hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty level;

18 (ii) The child has a parent who does not have a high
19 school diploma or a GED;

20 (iii) The weight of the child at birth was below
21 five pounds (5 lbs.) and nine ounces (9 oz.);

22 (iv) The child has a parent who was under eighteen
23 (18) years of age at the birth of the child;

24 (v) An immediate family member of the child has a
25 history of substance abuse or addiction;

26 (vi) The child has a demonstrable developmental
27 delay as identified through an official screening;

28 (vii) The child is eligible for services under the
29 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq., as it
30 existed on January 1, 2025;

31 (viii) The child is income-eligible for Title I
32 programs;

33 (ix) The child has limited English language
34 proficiency; or

35 (x) The child has a parent who has a history of
36 abuse or neglect or the child is a victim of abuse or neglect.

1 (2)(A) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education shall
2 award grants or contracts to appropriate early childhood programs selected by
3 the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with
4 specified programmatic standards.

5 (B)(i) These standards ~~will~~ shall be developed by the
6 Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, with the advice and
7 assistance of the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission.

8 (ii) Standards for funding the Home Instruction for
9 Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) U.S.A. ~~will~~ shall be developed in
10 conjunction with the Arkansas HIPPY Advisory Board.

11 (C) The Home Instruction for Parents of Preschool
12 Youngsters (HIPPY) U.S.A. regional technical assistance and training center
13 shall be defined and funded as an integral part of the Home Instruction for
14 Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY) U.S.A. to provide necessary training,
15 technical assistance, and program support to program sites in Arkansas.

16 (b) The programmatic standards and other rules necessary for the
17 implementation of the Arkansas Better Chance Program and the Arkansas Better
18 Chance for School Success Program shall be adopted by the State Board of
19 Education in accordance with the provisions of the Arkansas Administrative
20 Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.

21 (c)(1) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education may expend a
22 maximum of two percent (2%) of available funds to administer the Arkansas
23 Better Chance Program and the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success
24 Program and to monitor Arkansas Better Chance Program and Arkansas Better
25 Chance for School Success Program grantees to ensure compliance with
26 programmatic standards.

27 (2) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education may
28 contract with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education to
29 administer the Arkansas Better Chance Program and the Arkansas Better Chance
30 for School Success Program.

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32 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 6-45-108 is repealed.

33 ~~6-45-108. Criteria for determining need.~~

34 ~~(a)(1) All children three (3) years of age and four (4) years of age~~
35 ~~who are members of a family with a gross family income not exceeding two~~
36 ~~hundred percent (200%) of the federal poverty guidelines are eligible to~~

1 ~~attend an Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program if there is an~~
2 ~~Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program available in the school~~
3 ~~district where the child resides and if there is available space for the~~
4 ~~child to attend the Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program.~~

5 ~~(2) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the~~
6 ~~Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education may develop a fee~~
7 ~~schedule and establish eligibility based on family income for children who~~
8 ~~are not eligible under subdivision (a)(1) of this section, but priority~~
9 ~~enrollment shall be allowed to children eligible under subdivision (a)(1) of~~
10 ~~this section.~~

11 ~~(b) The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education and the~~
12 ~~Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education shall review various~~
13 ~~criteria for identifying and targeting the areas of the state with the~~
14 ~~greatest need for early childhood programs.~~

15 ~~(c) The State Board of Education, with the advice and assistance of~~
16 ~~the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, shall adopt the~~
17 ~~appropriate criteria for identifying Arkansas children with the greatest need~~
18 ~~to participate in Arkansas Better Chance for School Success Program-funded~~
19 ~~early childhood programs.~~

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