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ANNUAL EDUCATION REPORT CARDS

House Bill 5212
Sponsor: Rep. Charles LaSata
Committee: Education

Complete to 12-27-99

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5212 AS INTRODUCED 12-10-99

House Bill 5212 would amend the Revised School Code to add reporting requirements and to set new deadlines for a school district's annual educational report. In the preparation of the reports, the bill specifies new responsibilities for schools, school districts, intermediate school districts, the state board, and the Department of Education.

Annual school district educational report. Currently the board members of a school district must prepare and, before September 1, submit to the state board an educational report for each school that it wants accredited. Then the school district must distribute its annual educational report to the public before October 15. The report must contain information about each public school's accreditation status, the status of the district's school improvement plan, a copy of and information about the district's core academic curriculum (either its own, or the model core curriculum recommended by the state board of education), a report about aggregate student achievement based upon certain kinds of test results, the district's retention report, the number of parents who participate in parent-teacher conferences, and other information about students who are enrolled in college level equivalent courses. These components of the educational report would continue to be required with a few exceptions noted below, and others would be added by House Bill 5212.

Components of the annual report modified or eliminated. Under the bill, a model core academic curriculum could be developed by the state board, or by the superintendent of public instruction. Under current law, the model core academic curriculum is developed only by the state board of education, and it may be adopted or adapted by a school district. In addition, the bill would eliminate the requirements to describe in the annual educational report both the process by which students are assigned to particular schools, and the description of each specialized school. Further, it would eliminate the requirement that participation in parent-teacher conferences be reported by elementary, middle, and secondary school level, and require instead the number and percentage of parents who participate in each school.

School district reporting requirements by school. Under the bill, a school district would be required to prepare and submit its annual educational report to the intermediate school district to which it is constituent, and to the Department of Education by July 1 (rather than only to the state board by September 1 as the law now requires), and that report would include the information described above for each school in the district.

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Further, for each of its high schools, the district also would be required to report three new kinds of information: a) the total number of students who took the American College Test (ACT) and their composite score, as well as the percentage of those in grade 12 who took the ACT; b) the percentage of graduating seniors who applied for admission to a four-year college or university who were admitted; and, c) the graduation rate for students in grade 12 (expressed as a percentage that is determined by dividing the number of students graduating at year-end by the number enrolled when the year began).

In addition, a school district would be required to report for each school a single average class size in grades K-5. However, for grades 6-12, a school district would be required to report an average class size in each of four subject areas: mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts. Further, the annual educational report also would be required to include the proportion of school operating funds allocated to the school that would be used for direct educational services; the composition of the school's staff (distinguishing instructional, administrative, and support staff), and the percentage of teachers with a master's, doctorate, or specialist's degree.

School district reporting requirements for district as a whole. In addition to the information about each school described above, the board of a school district would be required to submit at the same time to the intermediate school district and to the Department of Education all of the following information concerning the school district as a whole: a) the beginning, median, and highest teacher salary in the school district; b) the percentage of the school district's total school operating budget used for teacher salaries and benefits; c) the percentage of the school district's total school operating budget used for administrative salaries and benefits; and d) a comparison of these figures with the immediately preceding school year.

Finally, the board of a school district would be required to ensure that a copy of the annual educational report card for each school were available at the school and at the board office, and to provide a copy of the report without charge to any interested person upon request.

Department of Education requirements. Not later than July 15 each year, and using the information described above, the Department of Education would be required to compile and provide to each intermediate school district a report of the statewide averages for each category of information required in the educational report for which a statewide average can be calculated. Under the bill, the Department of Education (rather than the state board) would be required to prepare and make available to school districts and to intermediate schools districts suggestions for accumulating the information required for annual educational reports, and also a model annual educational report card for a school district or intermediate school district to consider as it implements these requirements.

Intermediate school district requirements. Not later than August 15 each year, an intermediate school district would be required to do all of the following: a) compile all of the information submitted by the school districts; b) calculate the intermediate school district average for each category of information; c) develop an annual educational report card for each constituent

school district that contains all of the information submitted by the school district, and that contains intermediate school district and statewide averages for each category of information for which those averages can be calculated (and when appropriate compiled both by individual school and by school district aggregate); and, d) provide a copy of the report card to the constituent school district, the department, the parent or legal guardian of each school-aged child, and to each newspaper of general circulation in the school district.

MCL 380.1204a

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.