

Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536



Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986
TDD: (517) 373-0543

Senate Bill 143 (as introduced 2-6-01)
Sponsor: Senator Loren Bennett
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 4-23-01

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to allow an intermediate school board to refer directly to the Superintendent of Public Instruction a resolution or petition for the transfer of territory from one district to another. Currently, property transfer decisions are made by intermediate school boards (unless a vote of the electors is required) and may be appealed to the State Board of Education. The bill would provide for appeals to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, rather than the State Board, and would extend the time allowed for bringing an appeal. In addition, the bill would refer to a territory's "taxable value", rather than "assessed valuation", in provisions requiring a vote of school electors.

Under the Code, an intermediate school board may detach territory from one school district and attach the territory to another school district if requested to do so by resolution of the board of a school district whose boundaries would be changed by the action, or by resolution of the board of a condominium association acting on a petition signed by at least two-thirds of the co-owners of the association residing on the land to be transferred; or if petitioned by at least two-thirds of the people who own and reside on the land to be transferred. The territory to be detached must be contiguous to the school district to which it is attached. The intermediate school board must take final action within 60 days after receiving the resolution or petition. Under the bill, the board would have to take final action within this time limit except as provided for direct referrals to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The bill also would refer to intermediate school boards acting jointly under Section 953 of the Code, in provisions that refer only to an intermediate school board. (Under Section 953, if the territory of the affected school districts extends into two or more intermediate school districts (ISDs), the intermediate school board of each ISD must meet jointly and sit as a single board to act upon the request for the transfer of territory. The resolution or petition for transfer of territory may be filed with the board of one of the ISDs.)

Under the bill, within 20 days after receiving a resolution or petition requesting a transfer of territory, an intermediate school board could refer the resolution or petition directly to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for action. If the territory of the affected school districts extended into two or more ISDs, the intermediate school board with which the resolution or petition was filed could refer it to the Superintendent for action only with the written concurrence of each of the other affected intermediate school boards. The referral, and any necessary concurrence, would have to be by resolution of the intermediate school board.

If an intermediate school board referred a resolution or petition to the Superintendent, he or she would have to hear the matter as a contested case under Chapter 4 of the Administrative Procedures Act (APA). In considering the matter, the Superintendent would have to consider the welfare of the affected pupil, including the length of his or her commute to and from school, on a school bus or otherwise.

The Superintendent would have to give the intermediate school board or joint intermediate school boards that referred the matter a copy of his or her decision and order at the same time they were given to the parties. Except as provided below (regarding a vote of the electors), the Superintendent's action would be final.

Currently, if the latest assessed valuation of the territory to be detached is more than 10% of the latest assessed valuation of the entire school district containing that territory, the action of the intermediate school board is not effective unless approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of the school electors of the school district from which the territory is to be detached. The bill would refer to the action of the intermediate school board, the joint intermediate school boards, or the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The bill also would replace references to “assessed valuation” with references to “taxable value”.

Under the Code, one or more residents owners of land considered for transfer from one school district to another, or the board of a school district whose territory is affected, may appeal to the State Board of Education the action of the intermediate school board or joint intermediate school boards in transferring the land, the failure to transfer the land, or action relative to an accounting from the affected boards of education. The appeal must be brought within 10 days after the action or determination of the board or joint boards. The bill provides, instead, that an appeal could be brought to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and would have to be received or postmarked not later than 15 days after the action of the board or joint boards.

Currently, if the intermediate school board or the joint intermediate school boards fail to take action on a resolution or petition within the 60-day time period, the appeal may be made to the State Board within 10 days after the end of that period. Under the bill, the appeal to the Superintendent of Public Instruction would have to be received or postmarked within 15 days after the end of the 60-day period.

The bill specifies that an appeal would have to be heard as a contested case under Chapter 4 of the APA.

MCL 380.951 et al.

Legislative Analyst: S. Lowe

FISCAL IMPACT

If an intermediate school district directly referred a property transfer resolution or petition to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, there would be some administrative costs to the State Department of Education associated with hearing the matter as a contested case under Chapter 4 of the Administrative Procedures Act.

The bill would have no fiscal impact on local government.

Fiscal Analyst: K. Summers-Coty