

REPEAL STATE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

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House Bill 4154 (Substitute H-1)

Sponsor: Rep. Ken Yonker

Committee: Education

Complete to 11-5-13

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4154 SUBSTITUTE H-1

House Bill 4154 would repeal Section 1280 (MCL 380.1280) of the Revised School Code, which establishes the Michigan school accreditation program administered by the Michigan Department of Education. The bill is tie-barred to House Bill 5112, meaning that House Bill 4154 could not go into effect unless House Bill 5112 is also enacted into law. [Note: House Bill 5112 would create a school and school district letter grading system to evaluate each of Michigan's schools and school districts, A, B, C, D, or F.]

Repeal of Current School Accreditation Program

Currently, the Michigan Department of Education accredits schools as having met or exceeded standards established for six areas of school operations: administration and school organization; curricula; staff; school plant and facilities; school and community relations; and, school improvement plans and student performance. The building-level evaluation used in the accreditation process includes school data collection, self-study, visitation and validation, determination of performance data to be used, and the development of a school improvement plan.

Under current law, the superintendent of public instruction annually reviews and evaluates for accreditation purposes the performance of each school that is unaccredited. Then the Department of Education and the intermediate school district within which the unaccredited school is located can, if asked to do so by the school district, provide technical assistance.

If a school is unaccredited for three consecutive years, it is subject to one or more of the following measures, as determined by the state school superintendent: an administrator of the school is appointed (at the expense of the affected school district); the parents of the students can send their children to any accredited school within the school district; the school aligns itself with an existing research-based school improvement model, or affiliates with a Michigan college or university for assistance; or, the school is closed.

House Bill 4154 would repeal Section 1280—the school accreditation section of the Revised School Code—in its entirety. In addition, the bill would amend nine other sections of the Code to eliminate all references to the state school accreditation program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have an indeterminate, though likely minimal, fiscal impact on the state and local school districts. The Michigan Department of Education could see increased administrative costs and redirection of staff time in order to create a letter grade system (as proposed in the tie-barred bill, House Bill 5112), but would also see a reduction in staff time and administrative costs due to the elimination of the school accreditation system. Additionally, local school districts may see a reduction in administrative staff time devoted to maintaining school accreditation.

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