

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
92nd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2019

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1715

By: Representative Murdock

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS; TO AMEND THE LAW
REGARDING JUVENILE OFFENDER EDUCATION IN AN
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.

Subtitle

CONCERNING ALTERNATIVE LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT FUNDING FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL
DISTRICTS; AND TO AMEND THE LAW REGARDING
JUVENILE OFFENDER EDUCATION IN AN
ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-20-2305(b)(2)(A)(ii), concerning school funding for alternative learning environments, is amended to read as follows:

(ii)(a) Funding for students in alternative learning environments shall be distributed based on rules promulgated by the State Board of Education.

(b) A public school district shall be eligible for receipt of alternative learning environment funding under this section immediately upon the enrollment of a public school student who attends the public school district in an alternative learning environment.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 6-48-101(1)(A), concerning the definition of "alternative learning environment", is amended to read as follows:



(1)(A)(i) "Alternative learning environment" means an alternate class or program ~~within~~ that serves a public school or public school district and that affords all public students an environment that seeks to eliminate barriers to learning for any student whose academic and social progress is negatively affected by the student's personal characteristics or situation.

(ii) The Department of Education shall by rule more fully define the student's personal characteristics and situations applicable under this chapter.

(iii) "Alternative learning environment" includes a regional alternative learning environment high school that is designed to serve public school districts within multiple counties.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 48, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-48-105. Regional alternative learning environment high schools.

(a)(1) The purpose of this section is to assist the juvenile justice system with financial support for adjudicated juveniles by giving students who have been adjudicated the opportunity to be placed in a regional alternative learning environment high school when the student who has been adjudicated has experienced difficulty or cannot succeed in the traditional public school setting or the alternative learning environment provided by the public school district under this subchapter.

(2) A parent or legal guardian of a student who has been adjudicated should be provided with the opportunity to request that their student who has been adjudicated attend a regional alternative learning environment high school.

(3) A regional alternative learning environment shall be included as part of a public school district's alternative learning environment program.

(b) Upon receipt of alternative learning environment funding under § 6-20-2305(b)(2)(A)(ii)(b), a public school district shall set aside a minimum of fifteen percent (15%) of the alternative learning environment funding received in order to fund a public school student's attendance at a regional alternative learning environment high school if the public school student:

(1) Is court-ordered to attend a regional alternative learning environment high school; or

(2) Has parents or legal guardians who have requested for the student to attend a regional alternative learning environment high school.

(c)(1) A public school district may use alternative learning environment funds distributed under § 6-20-2305(b)(2)(A)(ii) for any other purpose that is permissible under law or State Board of Education rules if, by the end of the third quarter of the school year, there is no public school student from the school district who is attending a regional alternative learning environment high school under subsection (b) of this section.

(2)(A) However, a public school district from which a student who is attending a regional alternative learning environment high school under subsection (b) of this section shall continue to use alternative learning environment funds set aside under subsection (b) of this section to pay for the public school student to attend the regional alternative learning environment high school until all payments on behalf of the public school student have been made to the regional alternative learning environment high school.

(B) Once a public school district has remunerated all payments on behalf of a public school student who is attending a regional alternative learning environment high school, the public school district may use any funds that remain in the portion of alternative learning environment funds set aside under subsection (b) of this section for any other purpose that is permissible under law or state board rules.