

State of Arkansas
95th General Assembly
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A Bill

SENATE BILL 607

By: Senators Crowell, J. Bryant, A. Clark, Dees, Flippo, B. Johnson, M. Johnson, B. King, F. Love, R. Murdock, C. Penzo, J. Petty, Rice, J. Scott, D. Wallace

By: Representatives Walker, J. Mayberry, S. Berry, Cozart, Eaton, Hall, Hollowell, McClure, Milligan, K. Moore, Painter, Pearce, Puryear, J. Richardson, Schulz, Vaught, Wooten

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT CONCERNING A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT IMPLEMENTS A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK FOR A PUBLIC SCHOOL WITHIN ITS DISTRICT; TO ESTABLISH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT INITIATES AND MAINTAINS A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO ESTABLISH THE REQUIREMENTS FOR A PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT THAT INITIATES AND MAINTAINS A FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK; AND TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.

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

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-10-117 is amended to read as follows:
6-10-117. Four-day school week – Definition.

(a)(1) It is found and determined by the General Assembly that granting ~~local~~ public school districts greater flexibility in scheduling instructional time can reap educational benefits for the students and financial rewards for the public school district.

(2) It is the intent of this section to authorize ~~local~~ public school districts to initiate and maintain public school educational programs on a four-day school-week basis, ~~so long as if~~ if planned instructional time ~~is~~ meets the State Board of Education ~~in accord with requirements established by~~



requirements promulgated under subsection (d) of this section.

(b) As used in this section, “four-day school week” means an educational program in which all students attend school for four (4) days a week but no fewer than the total number of hours required by the Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts in a five-day school week.

(c)(1) The board of directors of ~~any a public~~ a public school district ~~is authorized to~~ may initiate and maintain a four-day school week in any or all of the public schools in the public school district.

(2) The state board and the Department of Education shall not have the authority to approve or deny the decision of a public school district board of directors to initiate and maintain a four-day school week in any or all of its public schools under subdivision (c)(1) of this section.

(d)(1) ~~The State Board of Education~~ state board shall establish appropriate standards, guidelines, and rules for only the following:

(A)(i) The determination of ~~average daily membership of school districts and for~~ the distribution of state aid to each local public school district that elects to operate any or all of the public schools of its school district on a four-day school-week basis, to provide the public school district with an equitable share of state aid funds.

(ii) The state aid funds under subdivision (d)(1)(A)(i) of this section that are designated to ~~equate a four-day school-week operation by the school district to~~ ensure the educational opportunities provided by a public school district offering a four-day school week are equivalent to the educational opportunities provided by a public school district offering a five-day school week or a public school that follows a traditional calendar;

(B) The requirement that each public school district that initiates and maintains a four-day school week for any or all of its public schools under this section shall:

(i)(a) Average six (6) hours of instruction per school day and thirty (30) hours of instruction per school week.

(b) The hourly requirements under subdivision (d)(1)(B)(i)(a) of this section may be met with four (4) seven-and-one-half-hour school instructional days.

(c) A public school district that initiates

and maintains a four-day school week in a public school that provides instruction to students in grades nine through twelve (9-12) shall meet the clock-hour equivalency of one hundred twenty (120) clock hours for a Carnegie unit;

(ii)(a) Provide documentation to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education to determine the success of the educational program.

(b) Assessment measures utilized by the division under subdivision (d)(1)(B)(ii)(a) of this section shall include without limitation state-approved criterion-referenced tests and other assessment instruments required or approved by the division; and

(iii) Include the four-day school week on the agenda for the public school district's required annual report to the public to determine local support for and provide for continual community input into the success and continuation of four-day school weeks; and

(C) The forfeiture of the ability to initiate and maintain a four-day school week under this section if a public school district:

(i) Is classified by the state board as in need of Level 5 – Intensive support; and

(ii) Demonstrates persistent underperformance, as defined by state benchmarks, on the state-approved criterion-referenced test and other assessment instruments required or approved by the division.

(2) ~~Provided, however, that a~~ A public school district shall not receive any more state financial aid for offering a four-day school week of instruction than it would have received for offering a five-day school week of instruction.

(3) The state board and the department shall not promulgate rules regarding public school districts that initiate and maintain a four-day school week for any or all of its public schools that are in addition to the requirements under this subsection (d).

(4) A public school district that initiates and maintains a four-day school week for any or all of its public schools under this section shall:

(A) Demonstrate compliance with the requirements under subdivision (d)(1) of this section through a state-approved electronic application; and

(B) Not be required to submit additional reports or demonstrations of compliance with the requirements under subdivision (d)(1) of this section to the state board or division.

SECTION 2. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that school districts must determine and publish their school calendars in advance of the upcoming 2025-2026 school year; that school districts must have their school calendars established in order to prepare appropriate staffing, operational, and financial needs; that parents, students, staff members, and others associated with school districts must know in advance of the upcoming school year what the school calendar will be in order to make necessary arrangements; and that this act is immediately necessary to ensure school districts have the required information to arrange for and provide constitutionally mandated education to enrolled students. Therefore, an emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become effective on:

(1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

(2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor, the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the bill; or

(3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.