



HOUSE BILL 1080: Achievement School District.

2015-2016 General Assembly

Committee:		Date:	August 8, 2016
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	James R. Ritter
Analysis of:	S.L. 2016-110		Legislative Analyst

OVERVIEW: *S.L. 2016-110 establishes the Achievement School District (ASD) under the control of the State Board of Education (SBE) and headed by the ASD Superintendent. The SBE is authorized to select, upon recommendation of the ASD Superintendent, five qualifying elementary schools that meet certain performance criteria to transfer to the ASD as achievement schools.*

The ASD Superintendent may waive SBE rules, regulations, policies, and procedures for achievement schools, but at a minimum, the schools must meet the statutory requirements for charter schools. An achievement school operator will be selected to operate an achievement school and have a direct role in making decisions on school finance, human capital, and curriculum and instruction.

The achievement school may remain under the supervision of the ASD for up to eight consecutive years through a contract with an AS operator.

If a local board of education transfers a qualifying school to the ASD, the local board may ask the SBE to create an innovation zone for up to three continually low-performing schools within its local school administrative unit for up to five years. The act also requires the SBE to authorize the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education to create an innovation zone that may include up to five low-performing schools among Project Lift Schools and Beacon Initiative Schools for the 2017-2022 school years.

The SBE must contract with an independent research organization (IRO) beginning in 2016-2017, to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the ASD and innovation zones. The IRO is directed to report its interim findings to the SBE annually beginning February 15, 2017, with a final report due by February 15, 2023. The SBE must provide the IRO report, along with recommended legislative changes, to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee annually, beginning March 1, 2017, until submission of the final report in 2023.

This act became effective July 22, 2016, and applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year. In the discretion of the SBE (i) the ASD Superintendent may not be required during the 2016-2017 school year to recommend qualifying schools for inclusion in the ASD for the 2017-2018 school year and (ii) the timeline for selection of achievement schools for the 2017-2018 school year may be varied, but in no event may the local board of education's decision to close the qualifying school or transfer it to the ASD occur later than April 1, 2017. The SBE may select up to five qualifying schools to transfer to the ASD beginning with the 2017-2018 school year, but must select at least two qualifying schools to transfer to the ASD no later than the 2018-2019 school year and must have selected five qualifying schools for transfer to the ASD no later than the 2019-2020 school year.

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