



2015-2016 General Assembly

# HOUSE BILL 97: 2015 Appropriations Act, Sec. 8A.4: Identification of Low-Performing Schools and Units

**Committee:**  
**Introduced by:**  
**Analysis of:** Sec. 8A.4 of S.L. 2015-241

**Date:**  
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Legislative Analyst

**SUMMARY:** *Sec. 8A.4 of S.L. 2015-241 (i) repeals the directive that the State Board of Education (SBE) must consider incorporating into the School-Based Management and Accountability Program a character and civic education component which may include a requirement for student councils, (ii) redefines low-performing schools, and (iii) creates a new category of low-performing local school administrative units (LEAs).*

**With respect to "low-performing schools:"**

*Redefines a "low-performing school" to mean a school that receives a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth."*

*Modifies the statutory process that should be used once a school is identified as low-performing that includes the following steps:*

- A 30-day timeline for a superintendent to submit to a local board of education (local board) a preliminary plan designed to improve both the school performance grade and the school growth score.*
- Within 30 days, the local board must approve, modify or reject the preliminary plan submitted by the superintendent. The preliminary plan must be made public prior to the local board's vote.*
- The local board must submit a final plan to the SBE within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The SBE must review the plan and may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board must then consider the SBE's recommendations and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes.*
- The local board must provide access to the final plan on the LEA's Web site. The SBE must provide access to each low-performing school plan on the Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Web site.*

*Each school identified as a low-performing school must provide written notification to the parents and guardians of students attending the school within 30 days of the identification that includes at least the following information:*

- A statement the school has received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" accompanied by an explanation of school performance grades and growth scores.*
- The school performance grade and growth score of the school.*

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Director



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- *Information about the preliminary plan and the availability of the final plan on the LEA's Web site.*
- *The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board.*
- *A description of any additional steps the school is taking to improve performance.*

## *With respect to "low-performing LEAs:"*

*Defines a "low-performing LEA" as a low-performing unit in which the majority of the unit's schools have been identified as low-performing schools. The SBE is directed to identify low-performing LEAs on an annual basis.*

*Creates a statutory process to be used once a low-performing LEA is identified that includes the following steps:*

- *A 30-day timeline for a superintendent to submit to a local board a preliminary plan designed to improve both the school performance grade and the school growth score of each low-performing school in the unit.*
- *Within 30 days, the local board must approve, modify, or reject the preliminary plan submitted by the superintendent. The preliminary plan must be made public prior to the local board's vote.*
- *The local board must submit a final plan to the SBE within five days of the local board's approval of the plan. The SBE must review the plan and may offer recommendations to modify the plan. The local board must then consider the SBE's recommendations and, if necessary, amend the plan and vote on approval of any changes to the final plan.*
- *The local board of education must provide access to the final plan on the LEA's Web site. The SBE must provide access to each low-performing LEA's plan on the DPI's Web site.*

*Each LEA identified as low-performing must provide written notification to the parents and guardians of all students attending any school in the unit within 30 days of the identification that includes the following information:*

- *A statement that the SBE has found that a majority of the schools in the LEA have "received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and have been identified as low-performing schools" accompanied by an explanation of the school performance grades and school growth scores.*
- *The percentage of schools identified as low-performing.*
- *Information about the preliminary plan and the availability of the final plan on the LEA's Web site.*
- *The meeting date for when the preliminary plan will be considered by the local board.*
- *A description of any additional steps the LEA and schools are taking to improve student performance.*
- *For notifications sent to parents and guardians of students attending a school that is identified as low-performing, a statement that the SBE has found that the school has received a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" and has been identified as a low-performing school. This notification must*

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*also include the school performance grade and school growth score the school received and an explanation of the school performance grades and school growth scores.*

*This section became effective July 1, 2015.*