

HB 2037 -- SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

SPONSOR: Lauer

The bill changes the laws regarding school accreditation. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Requires, when annual performance reports become available and before the State Board of Education makes any changes in accreditation, the state board to appoint a team to conduct a complete performance analysis of any district whose annual performance report score is consistent with provisionally accredited or unaccredited status. The analysis will look at the effectiveness of programs within the district, including but not limited to curriculum, data management, community involvement, professional development, district contracts, and financial management. The team must include an experienced teacher and an experienced administrator from successful school districts of comparable size and per-pupil funding. The size of the audit team will be based upon the size of the school to be audited. The audit team must report its findings to the state board and the local board of education. The state board may require all or part of those findings to be addressed in the comprehensive school improvement plan;

(2) Requires the board of education of any district whose annual performance report score is consistent with provisionally accredited or unaccredited status to submit a comprehensive school improvement plan that provides for the following:

(a) Identification of the areas of academic deficiency in student performance on the statewide assessment;

(b) Implementation of research-based strategies to assist the district in addressing the areas of deficiency;

(c) Alignment of the district's curriculum to address deficiencies in student achievement; and

(d) Reallocation of district resources to address the causes of the academic deficiency;

(3) Requires comprehensive school improvement plans to be evaluated based upon standards established under the bill and upon the following time lines:

(a) The comprehensive school improvement plan must be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on or before August 15 following any school year in which a school district

building achieves an annual performance report score that is consistent with provisionally accredited or unaccredited status;

(b) The department must review and identify areas of concern in the plan within 60 days of receipt; and

(c) The district must forward any changes to the department within 60 days of notice to the district of the areas of concern;

(4) Requires the department to withhold funding formula moneys from any school district that fails to submit a comprehensive school improvement plan and released upon submission of a comprehensive school improvement plan that meets the established requirements;

(5) Requires school boards in school districts whose annual performance report score is consistent with provisionally accredited or unaccredited status to immediately enter into a contract with the state board to commit to certain interventions for each school building whose annual performance report score is consistent with provisionally accredited or unaccredited status. Upon mutual agreement of the local school board and the state board, a school whose grade configuration, curriculum, or student assignments are deemed to make the annual performance report score an inaccurate indicator of the need for a contract will be exempt; and

(6) Prohibits, when a contract is executed, the state board of education from accrediting a district at a level below provisionally accredited for the term of the contract. The contract must require intensive professional development for all board members, administrators, and teachers. When the state board deems it necessary, the contract will include provisions requiring the school district to engage community partners to support school improvement projects within 30 days of the contract execution, or the contract must be null and void.