

HB 2265 -- SCHOOL ACCREDITATION

SPONSOR: Sommer

This bill places a moratorium on classifications of school districts as unaccredited or provisionally accredited between January 1, 2014 and July 1, 2017. The bill requires provisionally accredited and unaccredited school districts and any school district with a building performing at unaccredited level to enter into a contract with the State Board of Education (SBE) for interventions. If the SBE deems it necessary, the contract must require engagement of community partners.

Review teams must be assigned by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to provisionally accredited and unaccredited districts, to a building designated as unaccredited, and when the SBE deems a district in need of additional support. The review team will identify priority areas for improvement and assist in locating resources. If the district achieves growth in its priority areas and continues to score at the provisionally accredited level on its annual performance report, it will remain provisionally accredited. For an unaccredited school, the department and a leadership team composed of regional educational leaders chosen by the department will study instructional models and facilitate the selection of a research- or evidence-based model. The department and district must agree to a set of common instructional goals and student achievement outcomes for regaining accreditation.

The bill requires local school board members who are reelected after a break in service to complete orientation and training. All board members must complete six hours of continuing education within their first year of office. Certain districts will require 12 hours of training. Failure to complete training will result in forfeiture of the position on the school board.

The bill specifies that the board of education of a district that does not maintain a high school serving grades nine through 12 must pay tuition and provide transportation to a public high school in another district of the same or an adjoining county.

The bill permits students who participated in the transfer program in school year 2013-14 to continue until graduation under conditions specified in the bill, unless the sending district regains accreditation, in which case the student must return when he or she would have to change school buildings in the receiving district. Test scores of the transfer students do not count in the receiving district. Transportation is no longer required when the sending district regains provisional accreditation.