

Education Committee

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EDUCATION COMMITTEE

LEGISLATION ENACTED

executive session; school safety plans (S.B. 1012) – Chapter 59 E

[SEE THE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE.](#)

empowerment scholarships; third-party administrator; repeal (S.B. 1036) – Chapter 8

Removes the requirement that the Arizona Department of Education contract with a third-party administrator to assist in the financial administration of empowerment scholarship accounts.

schools; parental rights; posting (S.B. 1061) – Chapter 64

Directs the Arizona Department of Education to post a statutory handbook of parental rights on its website consisting of specified statutes relating to: 1) the Parents' Bill of Rights; 2) parental involvement in schools; 3) the rights of parents and students at public educational institutions; 4) parental permission and informed consent for surveys; 5) school councils; 6) approval of courses of study and instructional materials; and 7) parental access to instructional materials. Each school district and charter school must prominently post a link to the handbook on a publicly accessible portion of its website.

STO report; DOR; posting deadline (S.B. 1100) – Chapter 10

[SEE THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.](#)

~~empowerment scholarships; qualified schools; reservations~~ (NOW: empowerment scholarships; qualifications; administration; appropriations) (S.B. 1224) – Chapter 12

Permanently includes a nongovernmental school, located within two miles of the Arizona border in an adjacent state, as a *qualified school* for students residing on an Arizona Indian reservation who qualify for the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) Program. Allows ESA monies to be used for goods and supplementary materials and removes the permitted use for a Coverdell education savings account. Requires the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to close an ESA that has not been renewed for three academic years 60 days after notifying the parent.

Transfers ADE's authority to adopt ESA Program rules and policies to the State Board of Education (SBE) and requires, retroactive to March 20, 2020, SBE to adopt rules by November 1, 2020. Transfers ADE's authority to refer cases of substantial misuse of ESA monies to the Attorney General (AG) to the SBE. The SBE must establish a process for a parent to appeal an ADE administrative decision relating to the ESA Program and prescribes notification requirements for

the appeals process. ADE must annually develop a handbook on ESA policies and procedures by July 1 and post the handbook and appeals process on the ADE website.

Requires the ADE ESA Fund and the State Treasurer ESA Fund to consist of legislative appropriations rather than monies retained by ADE from a student's base support level and additional assistance. Authorizes ADE or the State Treasurer to request an increase in appropriations if the number of ESAs significantly increases after FY 2021. ADE and the State Treasurer must separately list the fund amounts in their budget estimates.

Retroactive to March 20, 2020, appropriates, from the state General Fund to the ADE ESA Fund to ADE, in FY 2021: 1) \$276,000 and five full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) for an ESA call center; 2) \$388,000 and six FTEs for ESA case managers; and 3) \$136,000 and two FTEs for accounting staff. Appropriates from the state General Fund in FY 2021: 1) to ADE, \$150,000 to conduct statewide seminars and trainings for ESA applicants, staff development and outreach activities; and 2) to SBE, \$100,000 and one FTE for administrative support in the rulemaking and appeals processes and \$50,000 for AG legal services relating to ESA appeals. By August 1, 2020, and retroactive to March 20, 2020, the AG must provide ADE and the SBE with guidance on the type of information collected through the ESA Program subject to public records requests.

financial literacy; state treasurer; fund (S.B. 1292) – Chapter 76

Adds, to the statutory duties required of the State Treasurer, promoting and raising awareness of financial literacy to Arizona residents. Establishes the State Treasurer's Financial Literacy Fund (Fund) consisting of legislative appropriations and other available public or private monies to promote financial literacy. The State Treasurer must administer, invest and divest monies and credit monies earned from investment to the Fund. Fund monies are continuously appropriated and exempt from lapsing.

suicide prevention training; school employees (S.B. 1445) – Chapter 82

Requires each school counselor or school social worker training program in Arizona to provide evidence-based suicide awareness and prevention instruction that meets specified criteria to all school counselor and school social worker candidates in the program.

student identification cards; suicide prevention (S.B. 1446) – Chapter 83

Beginning July 1, 2021, requires higher education institutions issuing student identification cards and school district governing boards and charter school governing bodies issuing student identification cards for grades 9 through 12 to include on each new identification card: 1) the telephone number for a national suicide prevention lifeline, a national network of local crisis centers or a local suicide prevention hotline; or 2) a statement describing how to access a text-based emotional support service. The information may be printed on the identification card or included on an affixed sticker.

Arizona teachers academy; program pathways (S.B. 1492) – Chapter 85

[SEE THE HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE.](#)

mental health omnibus (S.B. 1523/H.B. 2764) – Chapter 4

[SEE THE HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE.](#)

unification; consolidation; notice; ballot language (H.B. 2109) – Chapter 14

Beginning January 1, 2023, requires notice of a proposed school district governing board vote on the formation of a unified school district by a high school district and at least one common school district to be posted: 1) at least 90 days before the proposed vote; and 2) in at least three public places in each of the districts proposed to be unified. Increases, from 60 days to 120 days after receiving a petition from a majority of the common school district governing board or 10 percent of the residents, the deadline for the county superintendent to call a special election to establish a unified school district, if the next regular election is not within 90 days. Extends the time frame a notice must be posted before an election from 10 days to either: 1) at least 90 days, for an election held at least 90 days after receipt of the petition; or 2) as soon as is practicable for an election held fewer than 90 days after receipt of the petition.

Requires notice of an election to determine school district consolidation to be posted at least 90 days, rather than 25 days, before the election. Removes the required disclosure that consolidation includes the assumption of liability for indebtedness by the resulting school district on the school district consolidation ballot.

civics celebration day; civics education (H.B. 2625) – Chapter 25

Designates September 25 of each year as Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Celebration Day, which is not a legal holiday. Each public school must dedicate a majority of Sandra Day O'Connor Civics Celebration Day to civics education.

Adds, to the duties of the State Board of Education (SBE), developing a list of recommended civics education resources that align with academic standards for social studies. Directs the SBE to establish a process for public schools to recommend resources for addition to the list.

crisis management team; underperforming districts (H.B. 2684) – Chapter 26 E

An emergency measure effective March 24, 2020, that directs the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) to establish a crisis management team to intervene and recommend changes in a school district (district) operating a school that: 1) was assigned an F letter grade in school years 2016-2017 and 2018-2019; and 2) had fewer than five percent of pupils proficient on the statewide English language arts and mathematics assessments in school year 2018-2019. The Superintendent

of Public Instruction (SPI) must appoint crisis management team members as outlined and may retain a portion of state monies directed to the district to compensate members who are not ADE employees. The district must reduce its budget limit accordingly.

Directs the crisis management team to evaluate local circumstances and district needs in consultation with community stakeholders and provide written recommendations to address issues contributing to persistent academic underperformance. The district must respond to the written recommendations with either efforts for implementation or rejecting the recommendations. If the district rejects the recommendations, the district must provide reasons for rejection. If the crisis management team determines a change in administration is necessary to meet the community's education needs, the district must terminate the contract of the district superintendent. If the crisis management team determines a long-term sustainability plan is viable, ADE must establish an implementation plan and projected timeline for the district. The district must respond to the implementation plan outlining adoption of the plan with any necessary modifications and provide regular reports to ADE. The district may request assistance in implementation or community engagement.

Outlines reporting requirements for the crisis management team and district. Repeals crisis management team authority and requirements on April 1, 2021.

K-12 education; budget reconciliation; 2020-2021 (H.B. 2902/S.B. 1685) – Chapter 49

[SEE THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE.](#)

public school closures; coronavirus disease. (H.B. 2910/S.B. 1693) – Chapter 47 E

An emergency measure effective March 27, 2020, and retroactive to March 16, 2020, addressing public school operations and requirements relating to the statewide school closure that began March 16, 2020, in response to the Governor's declaration of a state of emergency related to the coronavirus disease 2019.

School Operations – Requires a public school to continue to pay employees who are available to work during normal work hours from March 16, 2020, through March 29, 2020. Public schools are not required to extend the number of school days or add instructional hours to meet statutory instructional requirements or school finance calculation requirements.

If the statewide school closure is lifted by March 29, 2020, extends the testing window for the statewide assessment through May 31, 2020, and deems a public school's 2019-2020 letter grade to be the higher of the 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 letter grade.

If the statewide school closure is not lifted by March 29, 2020, requires public schools to offer students general educational opportunities for the duration of the closure as a condition of receiving state funding. Cancels the 2019-2020 statewide assessment and deems a public school's 2019-2020 letter grade to be the same as the school's 2018-2019 letter grade. Students are exempt from grade three promotion requirements and the State Board of Education (SBE) must adopt rules for high school graduation for the 2019-2020 school year. Public schools may deviate from

special education program requirements during the 2019-2020 school year while attempting to ensure that a student with a Section 504 Plan or an individualized education program has access to these educational opportunities. Allows public schools to utilize their transportation fleet during the statewide closure for operations that support students and families. A public school must continue to pay an employee who works remotely during normal work hours beginning March 30, 2020. If a school resumes physical operations, an employee may no longer work from home, unless otherwise authorized.

If the statewide closure is lifted before the end of the scheduled 2019-2020 school year, a public school must either resume physical operations or continue offering general education opportunities until the end of the school year.

School Finance – Through June 30, 2021, allows the Superintendent of Public Instruction, with SBE approval, to waive any school finance requirement necessary to implement procedures and requirements relating to the statewide school closure.

If the statewide school closure is not lifted by March 29, 2020, allows any monies generated during the school year to be used for 2020 summer school instruction. A school district may use its FY 2019 daily route mileage to calculate the FY 2021 transportation support level if the school's FY 2020 daily route mileage is lower than the FY 2019 mileage. A student who takes an online course in June or July 2020 generates up to 1.25 average daily membership for FY 2021.

Modified Reporting Requirements – Directs the Arizona Department of Education, by April 15, 2020, to apply for federal waivers from nutrition, assessment and accountability educational attainment requirements that cannot be met in the 2019-2020 school year.

If the statewide school closure is not lifted by March 29, 2020, requires the Auditor General to modify financial and performance data reporting timelines.