



Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Carol Napp

H.B. 343

130th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Rep. Stebelton

BILL SUMMARY

Eligibility for the GED tests

- Specifies that a person who is at least 18 years old (rather than 19, under current law) may take the tests of general educational development (GED) without additional administrative requirements, if the person is officially withdrawn from school and has not received a high school diploma.
- Requires a person who is at least 16 but less than 18 and who applies to take the GED to submit to the Department of Education written approval only from the person's parent or guardian or a court official (eliminating the current need to obtain approval from the school district superintendent or community school or STEM school principal where the person was last enrolled).

Operation of ABLE programs by community schools

- Beginning July 1, 2014, permits any community school that serves students enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program to operate an adult basic and literacy education (ABLE) program.
- Starting with the 2014-2015 school year (fiscal year 2015), requires the Chancellor of the Board of Regents to consider such a community school to be eligible for federal or state grants administered by the Chancellor to support the school's ABLE program.

Enrollment of individuals ages 22 to 29

- Beginning July 1, 2014, permits an individual age 22 to 29 who has not received a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalence to enroll for up to

two cumulative school years in either of the following for the purpose of earning a high school diploma: (1) a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by a community school or (2) a "challenged school district."

- For fiscal year 2015, limits the combined enrollment of individuals under the bill's provisions in dropout prevention and recovery community schools and in challenged school districts to 1,500 individuals, on a first-come, first-serve basis as determined by the Department of Education.
- Requires the Department to credit to each city, local, and exempted village school district the formula amount (\$5,800 for fiscal year 2015), adjusted by the district's state share index, for (1) each individual who resides in the district and enrolls under the bill's provisions in a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by a community school and (2) each individual who enrolls under the bill's provisions in the district (if it is a "challenged school district").
- For each individual enrolled under the bill's provisions in a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by a community school, requires the Department to deduct from the state education aid of the school district in which the individual resides (regardless of whether it is a "challenged school district") and pay to the community school the per-pupil formula amount.
- Requires the State Board of Education to develop standards for the reporting and measurement of the academic performance of individuals enrolled in a community school or challenged school district under the bill's provisions.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Eligibility for the GED

The bill specifies that a person who is at least 18 years old, rather than at least 19 years old as under current law, may take the tests of general educational development (GED), without additional administrative requirements, if the person is officially withdrawn from school and has not received a high school diploma.¹

The bill also specifies that a person who is at least 16 but less than 18 years old and who applies to take the GED must submit to the Department of Education written approval from the person's parent or guardian or a court official. This is a change from current law, which requires written approval from the superintendent (or superintendent's designee) of the school district or the principal (or the principal's

¹ R.C. 3313.617(A).

designee) of the community or STEM school where the person was last enrolled. Current law *permits* the Department to require approval of the person's parent or guardian or a court official, in addition to that of the district superintendent or school principal (or designee), if the person is younger than 18.²

Background

The test of General Educational Development is a privately published indicator of a combination of experience, education, and self-study that is considered the equivalent of completing the requirements for a high school diploma for persons who have withdrawn from school. It was created in 1942 for World War II military personnel who left school early to enter military service. In Ohio, the State Board of Education issues a "high school equivalence diploma" to those who attain a passing score on all areas of the GED test.³ Individuals may enroll in adult education classes and take practice tests to prepare for taking the test.

Operation of ABLE programs by community schools

Beginning July 1, 2014, the bill permits any community school that serves students enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by the school to operate an "ABLE" program. An ABLE program is an adult basic and literacy education program that offers instruction in basic skills such as reading, writing, math, problem-solving, and English as a second language, as well as preparation for the GED. Starting with the 2014-2015 school year (fiscal year 2015), the Chancellor of the Board of Regents must consider such a community school to be eligible for federal or state grants administered by the Chancellor to support the school's ABLE program.⁴

Enrollment of individuals ages 22 to 29

Current law entitles any individual who is a resident of the state and between the ages of 5 and 22 a tuition-free primary and secondary education until the individual attains a high school diploma. Also, an individual who is between three and five years old and has a disability is entitled to tuition-free special education and related services under both state and federal law.⁵ Generally, an individual who is 22 or older is not

² R.C. 3313.617(B).

³ R.C. 3313.611, not in the bill, and Ohio Administrative Code (O.A.C.) 3301-41-01.

⁴ R.C. 3314.362.

⁵ See R.C. 3313.64(B), not in the bill.



entitled to tuition-free education, except for certain veterans who enlist in the armed forces prior to attaining a high school diploma.⁶

Starting July 1, 2014, the bill permits an individual who is 22 to 29 years old and has not been awarded a high school diploma or a certificate of high school equivalence to enroll for up to two cumulative school years of additional tuition-free education in either of the following for the purpose of earning a high school diploma:

(1) A dropout prevention and recovery program operated by a community school that is designed to allow enrollees to earn a high school diploma;⁷

(2) A "challenged school district," which under current law is any of the following: (a) a "Big-Eight" school district (Akron, Canton, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown), (b) a poorly performing school district as determined by its performance index score, value-added progress dimension grade, or overall ratings on the state report card, or (c) a school district in the original community school pilot project area (Lucas County).⁸ (The term "challenged school district" is currently used to designate the school districts in which start-up community schools may be located.)⁹

For fiscal year 2015, the bill limits the combined enrollment of individuals in dropout prevention and recovery programs operated by community schools and in challenged school districts to 1,500 individuals on a first-come, first-serve basis as determined by the Department of Education. Starting on the bill's effective date, the Department must prescribe procedures and deadlines necessary to begin implementing this enrollment limit.¹⁰

State payments

The bill requires each community school that operates a dropout prevention and recovery program and each challenged school district to report the number of individuals who enroll in the school or district under the bill's provisions to the State

⁶ See R.C. 3314.08(L)(4), 3317.03(E)(4), and 3326.37(D), latter two sections not in the bill.

⁷ R.C. 3314.38(A).

⁸ R.C. 3317.24(B).

⁹ R.C. 3314.02(A)(3), not in the bill.

¹⁰ Sections 5 and 7.



Board of Education. Each community school also must report the district in which each individual resides.¹¹

Based on these reports, the Department must credit each city, local, and exempted village school district an amount equal to the "formula amount" (\$5,800 for fiscal year 2015) times the district's "state share index" for (1) each individual who resides in the district and enrolls under the bill's provisions in a dropout prevention and recovery program operated by a community school and (2) each individual who enrolls under the bill's provisions in the district (if it is a "challenged school district").¹²

For each individual enrolled in a dropout prevention and recovery community school, the Department must then deduct from the state education aid of the school district in which the individual resides (regardless of whether it is a "challenged school district") and pay to the community school an amount equal to the formula amount.¹³ ("Formula amount" and "state share index" are used to compute state funding to school districts and community schools under the current school funding provisions enacted in H.B. 59 of the 130th General Assembly. State share index adjusts a district's payments based on its tax valuation and, in some cases, on median income).¹⁴

Payments for the students ages 22 to 29 are limited to just the per pupil formula amount (adjusted by the state share index in the case of those enrolled in a challenged school district). Districts and community schools may not receive for those students other categorical payments under the school funding system, such as those for special education, career-technical education, limited English proficient students, or economically disadvantaged students.

Standards for reporting and measuring academic performance

The State Board must develop standards for the reporting and measurement of the academic performance of individuals enrolled in a community school or challenged school district under the bill's provisions. The bill also specifies that these schools and districts are subject to the standards.¹⁵

¹¹ R.C. 3314.08(B)(2)(i) and 3317.036(A).

¹² R.C. 3317.01, 3317.022(A)(1), and 3317.036(B).

¹³ R.C. 3314.08(C)(8).

¹⁴ See R.C. 3317.02, not in the bill.

¹⁵ R.C. 3314.38(B) and 3317.24(C).



HISTORY

ACTION

DATE

Introduced

11-07-13

