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BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Fiscal Agency

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Senate Bill 41

Sponsor: Senator John J. H. Schwarz, M.D.

Committee: Education and Mental Health

Date Completed: 3-8-89

SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 41 as introduced 1-11-89:

The bill would amend the School Code to require:

- The accreditation of public schools by September 1, 1994.
- The Department of Education, by January 1, 1992, to develop and make available to public schools standards for accreditation.
- The Department in the 1994-95 school year to review and evaluate for accreditation the performance of one-fifth of the State's public schools.
- The Department beginning with the 1995-96 school year and each school year thereafter, to review and evaluate for accreditation the performance of one-fifth of the State's schools, plus each school that did not meet accreditation standards the previous school year.
- Measures to be taken if accreditation stands were not met for three consecutive years.

The bill is tie-barred to Senate Bill 39, which would require local school boards to make available to all pupils attending school in the district a core curriculum based on a core curriculum that would have to be developed by the State Board of Education.

Accreditation

The board of a school district would have to provide before September 1, 1994, that each public school in the district was accredited. "Accredited" would mean certified by the State Board of Education as having met or exceeded certain educational standards, processes, and criteria determined by the State Board as necessary for providing a "quality education" to pupils.

The State Board would be required to promulgate rules, as necessary, to implement the bill's provisions.

Standards

By January 1, 1992, the Department would be required to develop and make

available to all K to 12 public schools standards to be applied to each school for accreditation purposes.

#### Annual Review and Evaluation

In the 1994-95 school year, the Department would be required to review and evaluate for accreditation purposes the performance of one-fifth of the public schools in the State. Beginning in 1995-96 and each school year thereafter, the Department would be required to review and evaluate for accreditation purposes the performance of one-fifth of the schools in the State, plus each school that did not meet accreditation standards the immediately preceding school year. The accreditation evaluation would have to include, but not be limited to, all of the following applicable performance information:

- The success of the school in implementing the core curriculum as proposed in Senate Bill 39.
- The results of Statewide subject matter assessment tests and nationally normed achievement tests that were given to pupils attending the school.
- For the current and previous school year, the percentage of pupils in the school, identified by grade level, who left school and within the next 12 months did not enroll in another educational program leading to a high school diploma or the equivalent of a high school diploma.
- The attendance rate of pupils in the school.
- Other criteria considered appropriate by the State Board.

#### Failure to Meet Standards

A school that had not met accreditation standards for three consecutive years would be subject to one or more of the following measures, as determined by the State Board:

- The school would receive technical assistance, as appropriate, from the Department and the intermediate school district to which it was constituent until the school met accreditation standards.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction, or his or her designee, would appoint an administrator of the school until the school met the accreditation standards.
- A parent or person in loco parentis of a child who attended the school would have the right to send his or her child to any accredited public school with an appropriate grade level within the school district or a contiguous school district.
- The school would be closed.

Proposed MCL 380.1280 and 380.1280a

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

#### FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have an indeterminate impact on State government and local and intermediate school districts.

Under Senate Bill 41, the costs to the State and to local school districts would derive from three broad areas: 1) the costs of developing and implementing

accreditation standards for the State's approximately 3,500 public K-12 schools; 2) the costs to the Department of Education of annually reviewing and evaluating one-fifth of all schools' performances for accreditation, and to schools of submitting the information upon which these analyses would be based; and, 3) the costs of the bill's technical assistance, interim school administrator, parental choice, and school closure provisions.

Schools currently submit to the Department of Education some information on core curriculum, test data, and dropout rates. Additional costs could result from the bill's requirement that new data be submitted by schools on attendance rates and other criteria that the State Board of Education could require. The Department of Education does not currently have staff who systematically review such data for the purpose of school accreditation.

Additional costs would result from the processes defined in Senate Bill 41 for those schools not meeting accreditation standards for three years. In each case, the magnitude of the fiscal impact would depend on the number of schools failing to attain accreditation. According to Department of Education staff, the Department of Education currently does not have staff providing the kinds of technical assistance described in the bill. In instances in which the Superintendent of Public Instruction appointed an administrator until the school met accreditation standards, it is not clear whether the Department of Education or the local school district would bear the cost. Additional staff and transportation costs could result from parents' decisions to send their children to accredited public schools within the school district or a contiguous district. School closures also would result in increased costs.

If the mandates to school districts under this bill were considered new requirements as defined by Article IX, Section 29 of the State Constitution and interpreted by judicial decisions pertaining to it, the largest portion of these new costs would devolve upon the State.

The Governor has recommended \$500,000 GF/GP for FY 1989-90 for the accreditation program.

Fiscal Analyst: A. Rich

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.