

DROPOUT RECOVERY PROGRAMS

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Senate Bill 650 (S-1) as reported from House committee
Sponsor: Sen. Lana Theis

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

Senate Bill 651 as reported from House committee
Sponsor: Sen. Jeremy Moss

(Enacted as Public Acts 22 and 23 of 2020)

1st House Committee: Education
2nd House Committee: Ways and Means
Senate Committee: Education and Career Readiness
Complete to 1-22-20

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 650 would amend the section of the State School Aid Act that concerns dropout recovery programs. Currently, and until February 1, 2020, a district may employ or contract its program's teachers of record through an education management organization (EMO) if the district partners with that organization. The bill would remove the 2020 sunset (expiration date).¹

Additionally, where the act currently requires that a dropout recovery program provide an *advocate* or *teacher of record*, or both, the bill would require that both be provided.

The following terms are defined in the State School Aid Act:

Teacher of record means a teacher who holds a valid Michigan teaching certificate; who, if applicable, is endorsed in the subject area and grade of the course; and is responsible for providing instruction, determining instructional methods for each pupil, diagnosing learning needs, assessing pupil learning, prescribing intervention strategies, reporting outcomes, and evaluating the effects of instruction and support strategies. *Until February 1, 2020*, if the district partners with an EMO for the program, the teacher of record may be employed by or contracted through the EMO. [Note: The italicized portion would be removed by Senate Bill 650.]

Advocate means an adult available to meet in person with assigned pupils, as needed, to conduct social interventions, to proctor final examinations, and to provide academic and social support to pupils enrolled in the district's dropout recovery program.

MCL 388.1623a

¹ The sunset was added in the FY 2018-19 education omnibus supplemental (SB 149/2018 PA 586). House Fiscal Agency summary: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2017-2018/billanalysis/House/pdf/2017-HLA-0149-4373857D.pdf>

Senate Bill 651 would incorporate the dropout recovery program language currently in the School Aid Act into the Revised School Code and add reporting requirements. The bill would require that, if a school district or public school academy (PSA, or charter school) partnered with an EMO for a dropout recovery program, the district or PSA would have to ensure that the **EMO** provided all of the following to the district or PSA on a quarterly basis:

- All of the following regarding each eligible enrolled student:
 - Name.
 - Basis for eligibility, which includes expulsion under the mandatory expulsion provisions in the Revised School Code (which include acts such as possessing a dangerous weapon at school, arson, committing sexual conduct at school, persistent disobedience, or physical assault), suspension or expulsion under a local policy, referral by a court, pregnancy or parenthood, previous dropout, or risk of dropping out as determined by the district.
 - Number of credits needed to earn a diploma.
 - Anticipated program completion date.
- The names of all former eligible students who earned a diploma or enrolled in a public school since the last quarterly submission.
- The names of all former eligible students who did not earn a diploma or did not enroll in a public school since the last quarterly submission.
- The names of all *teachers of record* and *advocates* for eligible students in the program.

Additionally, a **district or PSA** operating a dropout recovery program would have to provide the following to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) annually:

- Number of eligible students enrolled in the program.
- Average number of months a student is enrolled in the program.
- Number of students who earned a diploma through the program for the prior year.
- Number of students who ended enrollment in the program and enrolled in a public school during the prior year.
- Average number of credit hours earned.
- Breakdown of the types of students enrolled based on eligibility.
- Name of the EMO with which the district or PSA partnered.
- Amount paid by the district or PSA to the EMO for each enrolled student, as well as any additional costs and fees related to the program.
- If the district or PSA partnered with an EMO, a copy of the partnership contract.

MCL 380.1231 and proposed MCL 380.1230i

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

According to committee testimony, the bills would protect the feasibility of the dropout recovery program. The program was created in 2012 to enroll students who had dropped out of high school in a specialized program in order to complete the courses needed to graduate. Because the number of students enrolled and the courses needed for graduation for each student fluctuate from year to year, districts generally combine their efforts and run a single community-wide program with other participating districts while sharing the

costs. The bills would allow districts' teachers of record to be employed by the EMO contracted to provide the instruction.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills would create an indeterminate, but likely minimal, cost increase for MDE and for school districts and PSAs that operate a dropout recovery program.

MDE would incur minimal administrative costs to collect a new report from districts and PSAs that operate a dropout recovery program.

School districts and PSAs that operate a dropout recovery program would incur administrative costs to comply with new annual reporting requirements. A school district or PSA that partners with an EMO for a dropout recovery program may incur an additional administrative cost to ensure that the EMO provides the required information on a quarterly basis to the school district or PSA.

A school district or PSA that provides an advocate or a teacher of record, but not both, will incur a cost to hire an additional employee to satisfy the requirement to provide both.

POSITIONS:

The following entities indicated support for the bills:

- Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators (1-14-20)
- Barry, Branch, Calhoun, Jackson, Lenawee, and Monroe ISDs (1-21-20)
- Graduation Alliance (1-21-20)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.