

REPEAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOL LETTER GRADES AND RANKINGS

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House Bill 4166 (H-1) as adopted by committee

Sponsor: Rep. Matt Koleszar

Committee: Education

Complete to 3-21-23

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

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4166 would amend the Revised School Code to remove a current requirement that the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) assign letter grades and rankings to public schools. The amended sections relate to how the department compiles lists of the lowest-performing schools as determined through those grades and rankings and implements certain accountability measures for schools determined to be in the bottom 5% of schools through those grades and rankings.

Under current law, by September 1 of each year MDE is required to release A-to-F grades for public schools based on their performance on certain indicators and rankings on other metrics. These published grades and rankings are in addition to MDE's School Index Score, which also measures school performance.¹

Under the bill, the School Index Score and related accountability measures would become the state's sole school performance score. References to actions that must be taken in regard to schools that are ranked lowest through the A-to-F grade and ranking system would be revised to refer instead to the school accountability system that is put in place under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, the federal education law). This is understood to mean the School Index Score or a successor measurement of school performance implemented by MDE in accordance with ESSA's school accountability requirements.

The bill also would remove requirements that MDE compile a list of "lowest-performing schools" based on the letter grades and rankings assigned and that districts and charter school authorizers not reopen a school at the same location as a school previously designated as low-performing unless certain criteria are met. Additional references and provisions relating to A-to-F performance grades and related accountability measures would be removed and replaced with references to the accountability system that is in place and is compliant with ESSA.

Finally, the bill would repeal section 1280g of the code, which contains requirements relating to the letter grade and ranking systems and actions MDE must take in regard to the schools deemed to be the lowest-performing in the state under those metrics.²

MCL 380.502 et seq. (amended) and MCL 380.1280g (repealed)

¹ <https://www.mischooldata.org/school-index/>

² For a description of 2018 PA 601, which added section 1280g to the Revised School Code:
<https://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2017-2018/billanalysis/House/pdf/2017-HLA-5526-F7D78799.pdf>

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4166 would decrease costs for the state and would have no fiscal impact on school districts, intermediate school districts (ISDs), and public school academies (PSAs, or charter schools).

MDE would realize reduced costs because the department would no longer be required to administer the statewide school A-to-F grading system and other rankings and accountability measures currently required under section 1280g of the code. However, MDE would still be required to maintain the School Index Score and related accountability measures due to federal ESSA requirements.

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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.