

HB396 INTRODUCED



1 HB396
2 DGZJUNN-1
3 By Representative Collins
4 RFD: Education Policy
5 First Read: 05-Feb-26



SYNOPSIS:

Under existing law, the State Superintendent of Education is responsible for the development and implementation of a school grading system.

This bill would revise the school grading system to update the design and revise the weights and indicators considered in assigning a grade, based in part on whether the school includes a 12th-grade class.

This bill would require the Alabama Workforce Board, in consultation with the State Department of Education, to develop a system for collecting, analyzing, and reporting on student performance data associated with completion of college and career readiness indicators.

This bill would also provide for the creation and membership of an Accountability Council to review and recommend revisions to the state accountability system.

A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT



HB396 INTRODUCED

Relating to public K-12 education; to amend Section 16-6C-2, Code of Alabama 1975, providing for the school grading system; to update the design and revise the weights and indicators considered in assigning a grade; to provide separate considerations for schools that include and don't include a 12th-grade class; to require the Alabama Workforce Board to consult with the State Department of Education in developing a system to measure student performance data associated with completion of college and career readiness indicators; and to create the Accountability Council to review and recommend revisions to the state accountability system.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Section 16-6C-2 of the Code of Alabama 1975, is amended to read as follows:

"§16-6C-2

(a) In addition to any other labels or designations assigned to public schools and public school districts pursuant to a federal, state, school, district, or other assessment or accountability system, the State Superintendent of Education, consistent with this chapter, shall develop a school grading system reflective of school and district performance. The grading system shall utilize the traditional A, B, C, D, or F framework.

(1) Schools receiving a grade of "A" are making excellent progress.

(2) Schools receiving a grade of "B" are making above average progress.

(3) Schools receiving a grade of "C" are making



HB396 INTRODUCED

satisfactory progress.

(4) Schools receiving a grade of "D" are making less than satisfactory progress.

(5) Schools receiving a grade of "F" are failing to make adequate progress.

~~(b) In developing this school grading system, the State Superintendent of Education shall seek input from parents, teachers, school administrators, existing State Department of Education advisory groups or task forces, and other education stakeholders on how the system can properly reflect not only the overall academic proficiency of each public school but also the academic improvements made by each public school, along with other key performance indicators that give a total profile of the school or the school system, or both.~~

~~(c) (b)~~ The State Superintendent of Education shall prescribe update the design and content of ~~the~~ an improved school grading system by not later than December 31, ~~2012~~ 2026. ~~It is the intent of the Legislature that the system be in place by no later than the 2013-2014 school year. The system may not be utilized by the State Superintendent of Education or the State Department of Education until sufficient rules have been adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act.~~

~~(d) (c)~~ Using an easy to understand grading scale, the school grading system shall describe achievement in the state, each district, and each school. Additionally, the State Superintendent of Education shall not be precluded from also



HB396 INTRODUCED

85 assigning grades to school feeder patterns or grades that
86 reflect the fiscal health and fiscal efficiency of a school or
87 school system.

88 ~~(e)~~ (d) The State Superintendent of Education shall make
89 these grades available to the general public and shall post
90 these grades on the website of the State Department of
91 Education as soon as the grades are available. Additionally,
92 appropriate grade information shall be delivered to the parent
93 or guardian of each public school student at least once
94 annually in the same manner that student report cards are
95 currently delivered.

96 ~~(f)~~ (e) (1) Using annual criterion-based,
97 state-authorized summative assessments and other key
98 performance indicators that give a total profile of the school
99 or the school system, or both, a school's grade, ~~at a minimum,~~
100 shall be based on a combination of student achievement scores,
101 ~~achievement gap, college and career readiness,~~ learning gains
102 of all students, learning gains of the lowest performing 25
103 percent of students, and ~~other indicators as determined by the~~
104 ~~State Superintendent of Education to impact student learning~~
105 ~~and success~~ college and career readiness.

106 (2)a. Each school that does not include a 12th-grade
107 class shall use the following indicators:

108 1. Student academic achievement using annual
109 criterion-based, state-authorized summative assessments shall
110 be weighted at 40 percent with 20 percent for Language Arts
111 and 20 percent for Math.

112 2. Student academic achievement growth using annual



HB396 INTRODUCED

criterion-based, state-authorized summative assessments, as determined by a criterion-based measure, shall be weighted at 40 percent.

3. Student academic achievement growth for the lowest performing 25 percent of students, as determined by using annual criterion-based, state-authorized summative assessments, shall be weighted at 20 percent with 10 percent for Language Arts and 10 percent for Math.

b. Each school that includes a 12th-grade class shall use the following indicators:

1. Student academic achievement using annual criterion-based, state-authorized summative assessments shall be weighted at 30 percent.

2. Student academic achievement growth, as determined by a criterion-based measure, shall be weighted at 20 percent.

3. Student academic achievement growth for the lowest performing 25 percent of students, as determined by using annual criterion-based, state-authorized summative assessments, shall be weighted at 10 percent with 5 percent for Language Arts and 5 percent for Math.

4. Additionally, college and career readiness shall be weighted at 30 percent and graduation rate shall be rated at 10 percent. College and career readiness shall include the following:

(i) Benchmark on ACT;

(ii) Successful completion of an international baccalaureate (IB) program with a qualifying score of four or above; dual enrollment college credit of A or B; or Advanced



HB396 INTRODUCED

Placement classes with a qualifying score of three or above;

(iii) Scoring gold or platinum on WorkKeys.

(iv) Possessing an industry-recognized credential of value for high-demand, high-wage jobs.

(v) Successful completion of an apprenticeship or a work-based learning or career technical degree.

(3) The State Department of Education shall ensure proficiency on the statewide summative assessment is aligned to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

(4) To ensure that the college and career readiness indicators accurately signal that students are prepared for high-wage, high-growth opportunities in this state, the Alabama Workforce Board, in consultation with the State Department of Education, shall develop a system for collecting, analyzing, and reporting the public school student outcomes associated with the completion of college and career readiness indicators in this section. This shall include an annual legislative report that captures the education system's return on investment, ensuring the state captures and reports on results beyond what is in the accountability formula including, but not limited to:

a. Postsecondary enrollment and persistence;

b. Military enlistment;

c. Industry-recognized credentials;

d. Median income within six years after graduation; and

e. High-wage, high-demand career sectors.

(5) When 60 percent of all public schools and public local education agencies earn either an A or B on the state



HB396 INTRODUCED

A-F school grading system, the grading scale for all letter grades awarded shall be raised 10 points the following year.

~~(2)~~a. (f) (1) Commencing with the 2021-2022 school year, the academic achievement of each student identified as an English language learner who has not shown proficiency on ACCESS for EL, or other state-approved English proficiency assessment, may not be considered in assigning an academic achievement grade to a school or school system for the first five years of enrollment of the student. The educational progress of each of these students shall continue to be measured in the academic growth category and the progress in English language proficiency category, and, at the end of the five-year period for the student, his or her proficiency shall again be considered in assigning an academic achievement grade to a school or school system on the state A-F school grading system.

~~b.~~ (2) Commencing with the 2024-2025 school year, the academic achievement of each student identified as a transfer student from a nonpublic school may not be considered in assigning an academic achievement grade to a school or school system for the first three years of enrollment of the transfer student. The educational progress of each of these transfer students shall continue to be measured in the academic growth category, and, beginning with the fourth year of enrollment of the transfer student, his or her academic achievement shall be considered in assigning an academic achievement grade to a school or school system on the state A-F school grading system.



HB396 INTRODUCED

~~(3)~~ (g) The State Superintendent of Education may not amend the state Every Student Succeeds Act option for including test scores of English language learners enrolled in United States schools. The option provides as follows: For the first year of enrollment, the test scores shall be reported, but the results on both the reading/language arts and math tests shall be excluded from the federal accountability system; for the second year of enrollment, a measure of student growth on both tests shall be included in the federal accountability system; and for the third year of enrollment, proficiency on both tests shall be included in the federal accountability system. Additionally, the option requires English language learners who have successfully left the English language learner subgroup by attaining English proficiency to be included in that subgroup for accountability purposes for four years.

(h) To further the intent of the Legislature to create transparency and ensure all agencies uphold the purposes of this section, the State Superintendent of Education shall oversee the creation and operation of a standing Accountability Council. The Accountability Council shall meet at least annually to review the entire accountability system and annual return on investment study, and provide recommendations for any needed revisions to the Governor, the Legislature, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education. The goal of the Accountability Council is to ensure that all Alabama students are succeeding and will continue to succeed in the future. The membership of



HB396 INTRODUCED

the Accountability Council shall consist of all of the following:

(1) Three members appointed by the Governor. One at-large member, one member who is a national expert on school accountability, and one member who is from the business community.

(2) One member each appointed by the following:

a. The President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

b. The Speaker of the House of Representatives.

c. The State Superintendent of Education.

d. The Alabama Education Association.

e. The School Superintendents of Alabama.

f. The Alabama Association of School Boards.

g. The Council for Leaders in Alabama Schools.

h. The A+ Education Partnership.

~~(g)~~ (i) The A-F school grading system shall be consistently applied so that grades of one school or system may be compared to the grades of any other school or system."

Section 2. This act shall become effective on October 1, 2026.