

HB 320 -- LAPSE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

SPONSOR: Muschany

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 13 to 2.

This bill creates a mechanism to prevent a school district from moving back and forth between unaccredited and provisionally accredited status. If a school district that has been classified as unaccredited within the past five years and has become provisionally accredited should lose its provisional accreditation, it will lapse on June 30 or at a later date determined by the State Board of Education.

Changes are also made to the required hearing on the plans for continuing the educational process after lapse, which must be held at least 60 days before the district lapses. A special administrative board, which may be appointed by the state board to monitor an unaccredited district, is also given standing to enjoin school board actions that might result in wastage of assets. The state board is given the option of permitting a lapsed district to continue to operate under its existing governance structure pursuant to terms and conditions the board establishes. A prohibition on attaching a lapsed district with more than 5,000 pupils to another district without the approval of the board of the receiving school district is removed.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that it is possible for a district that has been designated unaccredited and then achieved provisional accreditation to linger in provisionally accredited status without making progress. The bill imposes a time line to keep a district progressing, rather than marginally improving but never moving out of a provisionally accredited status.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Muschany; and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst