

CHAPTER 377

EDUCATION - PUBLIC SCHOOLS

HOUSE BILL 14-1381

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Fields, Buckner, Duran, Ginal, Hamner, Labuda, Lebsock, May, McCann, Melton, Moreno, Pabon, Pettersen, Salazar, Schafer, Singer, Exum, Hullinghorst, Ryden, Williams, Young, Rosenthal, Tyler;
also SENATOR(S) Todd, Nicholson, Zenzinger.

AN ACT**CONCERNING ADOPTION OF A SCHOOL CLOSURE PLAN AS A REQUIREMENT FOR CLOSING A LOW-PERFORMING PUBLIC SCHOOL.**

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

SECTION 1. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 22-11-307, **add** (5) as follows:

22-11-307. Accreditation of public schools. (5) (a) IF A LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD OR THE INSTITUTE DECIDES OR IS DIRECTED BY THE STATE BOARD TO CLOSE A PUBLIC SCHOOL BECAUSE OF LOW PERFORMANCE, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE INSTITUTE MUST DEVELOP AND UPDATE AS NECESSARY A SCHOOL CLOSURE PLAN THAT IMPLEMENTS EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICES DURING THE SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS WHO ARE ENROLLED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT IS CLOSED ARE FULLY SUPPORTED IN ENROLLING IN THE SUCCESSOR PUBLIC SCHOOL, IF ANY, OR IN ANOTHER PUBLIC SCHOOL. THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD OR THE INSTITUTE SHALL MAKE THE SCHOOL CLOSURE PLAN AND ANY UPDATES AVAILABLE IN WRITING TO THE STAFF OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, THE LOCAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, IF ANY, THE PARENTS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, AND THE COMMUNITY SURROUNDING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL. AT A MINIMUM, THE SCHOOL CLOSURE PLAN MUST INCLUDE:

(I) A PLAN FOR COMMUNICATING IN WRITING WITH PARENTS, SCHOOL STAFF, THE LOCAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, IF ANY, AND THE COMMUNITY SURROUNDING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE AFTER THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD OR THE INSTITUTE DECIDES TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND AT REGULAR INTERVALS THROUGHOUT THE CLOSURE PROCESS;

(II) THE PROCEDURES OR MECHANISMS BY WHICH THE LOCAL SCHOOL BOARD AND

Capital letters indicate new material added to existing statutes; dashes through words indicate deletions from existing statutes and such material not part of act.

THE INSTITUTE WILL SOLICIT AND CONSIDER INPUT ON THE SCHOOL CLOSURE PROCESS FROM THE STAFF OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, THE LOCAL TEACHERS ASSOCIATION, IF ANY, THE PARENTS OF THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL, AND THE COMMUNITY SURROUNDING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL;

(III) A TIMELINE FOR CLOSING THE PUBLIC SCHOOL THAT INCLUDES OR IS UPDATED TO INCLUDE ALL MAJOR STEPS AND DECISION POINTS IN COMPLETING THE SCHOOL CLOSURE AND STARTS NO LATER THAN THE DECISION TO CLOSE AND CONTINUES AT LEAST THROUGH THE REASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS AND THE OPENING OF A NEW PUBLIC SCHOOL, IF APPLICABLE; AND

(IV) A PLAN FOR REASSIGNING STUDENTS TO OTHER PUBLIC SCHOOLS, WHICH MUST, TO THE FULLEST EXTENT PRACTICABLE, TAKE INTO ACCOUNT PARENTS' CHOICE CONCERNING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO WHICH STUDENTS ARE REASSIGNED.

(b) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY PROVISION OF PARAGRAPH (a) OF THIS SUBSECTION (5) TO THE CONTRARY, A SCHOOL CLOSURE PLAN THAT APPLIES TO THE CLOSURE OF AN INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL MUST SPECIFY THAT:

(I) THE INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH PARENTS, SCHOOL STAFF, AND THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITY; AND

(II) THE INSTITUTE AND THE INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL WORK WITH THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IN WHICH THE INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL IS LOCATED TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS HAVE INFORMATION CONCERNING THE SCHOOL DISTRICT'S PROCESSES FOR REASSIGNING STUDENTS TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE SCHOOL CHOICE OPTIONS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS.

SECTION 2. Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds, determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

Approved: June 6, 2014