

SENATE BILL 5

By Tracy

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1, Part 2; Title 49, Chapter 1, Part 3 and Title 49, Chapter 1, Part 6, relative to curriculum standards for English language arts and mathematics.

WHEREAS, the General Assembly recognizes the unique qualities of our state and its citizens and students. Consequently, the General Assembly understands the necessity for curriculum standards that are world-class, highly rigorous, and clearly defined to meet the specific needs of our state; and

WHEREAS, standards that promote the autonomy of the state in making decisions for public education kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) are in the best interests of Tennessee students; and

WHEREAS, since the 2006-2007 school year, Tennessee has had three different sets of standards in English language arts and mathematics, with the last two sets of standards driven by national and federal reforms, instead of the state and local education agencies; and

WHEREAS, it is time for Tennesseans to develop their own set of highly rigorous standards in English language arts and mathematics that enable Tennessee schoolchildren to obtain a world-class education; and

WHEREAS, in developing these standards for Tennessee schoolchildren, there must be a smooth, orderly transition for teachers and students from the current standards driven by the federal initiatives to new standards created specifically for Tennessee schoolchildren by Tennesseans; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-1-309(a), is amended by deleting the words "Any adoption of educational standards" and by substituting instead the language "Except as provided in § 49-1-310, any adoption of educational standards".

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1, Part 3, is amended by adding the following language as a new section:

49-1-310.

(a)

(1) Prior to July 1, 2016, the state board of education shall adopt new state kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) standards for English language arts and mathematics. These standards shall be developed by Tennesseans to meet the specific needs of Tennessee schoolchildren for world-class, highly rigorous, and clearly defined standards that will enable them to graduate from high school college and career ready. Upon adoption by the state board, these standards shall be known as and may be called the volunteer state standards.

(2) The state board shall not initiate any expansion of the standards for English language arts and mathematics used in the public schools in the 2014-2015 school year.

(b)

(1) The state board shall recruit and select Tennessee public school teachers and instructional leaders, and faculty from higher education institutions located in the state who are subject matter experts in English language arts or mathematics and who are familiar with the developmental stages of children to participate on standards review and development committees and advisory teams that shall propose the volunteer state standards. These teams shall strive to propose world-class, internationally benchmarked, highly rigorous and relevant standards that promote and foster higher order thinking skills, meet the specific

needs of Tennessee students, and prepare Tennessee public school students for college and careers.

(2) The state board shall appoint a standards review and development committee for each of the subject areas of English language arts and mathematics to propose standards. The state board shall appoint at least one (1) standards review and development advisory team to propose standards for English language arts for the elementary grades, at least one (1) for the middle grades, and at least one (1) for the secondary school grades. The state board shall similarly appoint teams for mathematics standards. All teams in each subject area shall confer and collaborate and provide recommendations to the standards review and development committee in the subject area to ensure the application of the standards forms a seamless transition from one grade to the next.

(3)

(A) The state board may appoint as many members to each standards review and development committee and advisory team as it finds necessary to efficiently and quickly propose the new standards as required under subdivision (b)(1); provided, however, that no team shall consist of fewer than three (3) public school teachers and instructional leaders and one (1) faculty member from a higher education institution in this state.

(B) The state board shall also appoint to each standards review and development committee at least two (2) parents of public school students and to each advisory team at least two (2) parents with children who are public school students in the grades for which the advisory team

is proposing standards. The state board shall strive to identify and appoint parents with expertise in the subject area of the committee or team to which they are appointed or in child development. The state board shall strive to appoint parents from different areas of the state so that each grand division is equally represented on the standards review and development committees and advisory teams for English language arts and for mathematics.

(4) To ensure the standards proposed in each subject area are consistent across all grades and meet the requirements of subdivision (b)(1), the department of education shall assist, as requested by the state board, in the development of the standards and by reviewing the recommendations provided to the state board pursuant to subdivision (b)(1).

(5) The state board shall solicit the assistance of the Tennessee School Boards Association, the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents, and the Tennessee Parent Teacher Association in reviewing standards review and development committees and advisory teams' drafts of proposed standards to ensure that the teams have proposed consistent standards that meet the requirements of subdivision (b)(1).

(6) The state board shall enlist the aid of the Tennessee higher education commission, the board of regents system or its institutions, the University of Tennessee system or its institutions, and the Tennessee Business Roundtable in reviewing the standards after they are drafted, but prior to adoption by the state board. These groups shall ensure that consistent standards meeting the requirements of subdivision (b)(1) have been produced, that the volunteer state standards are geared to students being college and career ready, and that the

curriculum needs of students pursuing career and technical educational paths have been adequately met.

(7) The drafts of the proposed standards shall be posted for public review on the state board's web site at least sixty (60) days before the state board meeting at which the final adoption of the standards is to be considered. The state board shall provide a street address or post office box and an e-mail address on its web site to which the public may send comments on the appropriateness and consistency of the standards.

(8) The state board of education shall conduct at least one (1) public hearing on the standards for English language arts and one (1) public hearing on the standards for mathematics in each grand division of the state. At these meetings, public input as to the appropriateness and consistency of the standards shall be sought and allowed. Separate hearings may be conducted for different grade levels. All hearings shall be conducted at least sixty (60) days before the state board meeting at which the final adoption of the standards is to be considered.

(9) Notwithstanding § 49-1-309(b), before March 31, 2016, or at least sixty (60) days before the state board meeting at which the final adoption of the standards is to be considered, whichever is earlier, the state board shall report to the education committees of the house of representatives and the senate and shall present the standards to the committees for review.

(10) The state board shall vote on adoption of the standards produced under this section or any subsequently proposed changes or additions only at a public meeting at which a quorum of the state board is in attendance.

(c)

(1) Members of the standards development teams may be compensated for their services and reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with the comprehensive travel regulations promulgated by the commissioner of finance and administration and approved by the attorney general and reporter. Service on teams by public school teachers and instructional leaders shall be governed by § 49-5-206.

(2) The state board shall not be responsible for compensating or reimbursing travel expenses of those assisting the state board pursuant to subdivisions (b)(5) and (b)(6). Nothing in this subdivision (c)(2) shall require or prevent the organization that an individual assisting the state board represents from compensating the individual or reimbursing the individual for travel expenses, if travel is required.

(d) Each LEA shall be responsible for developing and implementing the instructional programs under the volunteer state standards that best fit its students' educational needs, that achieve levels of proficiency or advanced mastery of English language arts and mathematics, and that vigorously promote individual teacher creativity and autonomy.

(e) Any LEA may volunteer to field test the standards during the 2016-2017 school year. The volunteer state standards shall be fully implemented in the public schools in the 2017-2018 school year.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-1-226, is amended by adding the following language as a new subsection:

The contract awarded pursuant to subdivision (b)(1) shall be amended to ensure alignment with the volunteer state standards; provided, however, any such amendment shall be reviewed by the fiscal review committee. The new aligned assessments shall

be released and field tested during the 2016-17 school year with full implementation taking place in the 2017-18 school year.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.