

GRADE CHANGING PROCESS

House Bill 4016

Sponsor: Rep. William R. Keith

Committee: Education

Complete to 5-24-93

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4016 AS INTRODUCED 2-2-93

The School Code provides a process that must be followed for the changing of a grade given to a student by a teacher. If a teacher does not initially agree to a change in a grade, a five-member review panel is established made up of three teachers, a school board member, and the superintendent of schools (or a designee). A teacher can appeal the decision of a review panel to the school board, whose decision is final. The bill would make some changes in the process.

Under the bill, if a teacher did not concur in a proposed grade change, a teacher, counselor, or principal could cause a review panel to convene after consulting with the teacher and grade change proponent. The person causing the panel to convene would have to file a notice with the board, and the panel would have to meet to consider the proposed grade change within 20 days after the filing of the notice. After evaluating the reasons for the proposed grade change, the review panel could, by majority vote, approve, disapprove, or modify the proposed grade change. No change could be approved, however, unless the panel found that the proponent of the grade change had met the burden of establishing that there was no rational basis for the challenged grade under the teacher's established grading procedures. (Under current law: a panel can approve or disapprove a grade change but is not specifically authorized to modify a proposed change; there is no standard specified for the review panel to follow; and it is not specified who is able to cause a review panel to convene.)

A principal would not be able to convene a review panel unless the proponent of a grade change submitted a written request stating the reasons for the change within 30 days after the student received the grade. If the principal decided to convene a review panel, he or she would have to do so not later than 30 days after receiving the request.

The teacher or the proponent of a grade change could appeal the decision of a review panel to the school board, which could approve or disapprove the review panel's decision. The school board's decision would be final. If there was no timely appeal to the school board (within 30 days of the decision), then the review panel's decision would be final. (Currently, a teacher can appeal a review panel's decision but no one else.)

The composition of the review panel would remain as it is currently, but the bill would specify that an alternate would replace any panel member involved in a specific proposed grade change, and that the person who caused the panel to convene could not serve on the panel.

If a student's grade was changed by a review panel, that fact would be noted in the student's record. The code currently requires that a student be informed of any grade change. The bill would say a student or the student's parent or guardian and the teacher must be informed of any decision on a proposed grade change.

The bill also would specify that it did not intend to prevent a school district from adopting or maintaining a local policy or procedure permitting students requesting grade changes (or their parents or guardians) to attend a review panel meeting or to make an oral or written presentation to the panel.

The bill also would define the term "grade" to refer to a grade given for a final examination or a grade given at the conclusion of a marking period, semester, or term.

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