

AN ACT regarding schools.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing
Section 2-3.25g as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/2-3.25g) (from Ch. 122, par. 2-3.25g)

Sec. 2-3.25g. Waiver or modification of mandates within
the School Code and administrative rules and regulations.
Notwithstanding any other provisions of this School Code or
any other law of this State to the contrary, school districts
may petition the State Board of Education for the waiver or
modification of the mandates of this School Code or of the
administrative rules and regulations promulgated by the State
Board of Education. Waivers or modifications of
administrative rules and regulations and modifications of
mandates of this School Code may be requested when a school
district demonstrates that it can address the intent of the
rule or mandate in a more effective, efficient, or economical
manner or when necessary to stimulate innovation or improve
student performance. Waivers of mandates of the School Code
may be requested when the waivers are necessary to stimulate
innovation or improve student performance. Waivers may not
be requested from laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to
special education, teacher certification, or teacher tenure
and seniority.

School districts, as a matter of inherent managerial
policy, and any Independent Authority established under
Section 2-3.25f may submit an application for a waiver or
modification authorized under this Section. Each application
must include a written request by the school district or
Independent Authority and must demonstrate that the intent of

the mandate can be addressed in a more effective, efficient, or economical manner or be based upon a specific plan for improved student performance and school improvement. Any district requesting a waiver or modification for the reason that intent of the mandate can be addressed in a more economical manner shall include in the application a fiscal analysis showing current expenditures on the mandate and projected savings resulting from the waiver or modification. Applications and plans developed by school districts must be approved by each board of education following a public hearing on the application and plan and the opportunity for the board to hear testimony from educators directly involved in its implementation, parents, and students. Such public hearing shall be held on a day other than the day on which a regular meeting of the board is held. The public hearing must be preceded by at least one published notice occurring at least 7 days prior to the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation within the school district that sets forth the time, date, place, and general subject matter of the hearing. The school district must notify in writing the affected exclusive collective bargaining agent and those State legislators representing the district holding the public hearing of the district's intent to seek approval of a waiver or modification and of the hearing to be held to take testimony from educators. The affected exclusive collective bargaining agents shall be notified of such public hearing at least 7 days prior to the date of the hearing and shall be allowed to attend such public hearing. The district shall attest to compliance with all of the notification and procedural requirements set forth in this Section.

A request for a waiver or modification of administrative rules and regulations or for a modification of mandates contained in this School Code shall be submitted to the State Board of Education within 15 days after approval by the board

of education. The application as submitted to the State Board of Education shall include a description of the public hearing. Following receipt of the request, the State Board shall have 45 days to review the application and request. If the State Board fails to disapprove the application within that 45 day period, the waiver or modification shall be deemed granted. The State Board may disapprove any request if it is not based upon sound educational practices, endangers the health or safety of students or staff, compromises equal opportunities for learning, or fails to demonstrate that the intent of the rule or mandate can be addressed in a more effective, efficient, or economical manner or have improved student performance as a primary goal. Any request disapproved by the State Board may be appealed to the General Assembly by the requesting school district as outlined in this Section.

A request for a waiver from mandates contained in this School Code shall be submitted to the State Board within 15 days after approval by the board of education. The application as submitted to the State Board of Education shall include a description of the public hearing. The description shall include, but need not be limited to, the means of notice, the number of people in attendance, the number of people who spoke as proponents or opponents of the waiver, a brief description of their comments, and whether there were any written statements submitted. The State Board shall review the applications and requests for completeness and shall compile the requests in reports to be filed with the General Assembly. The State Board shall file reports outlining the waivers requested by school districts and appeals by school districts of requests disapproved by the State Board with the Senate and the House of Representatives before each May 1 and October 1. The General Assembly may disapprove the report of the State Board in whole or in part

within 30 calendar days after each house of the General Assembly next convenes after the report is filed by adoption of a resolution by a record vote of the majority of members elected in each house. If the General Assembly fails to disapprove any waiver request or appealed request within such 30 day period, the waiver or modification shall be deemed granted. Any resolution adopted by the General Assembly disapproving a report of the State Board in whole or in part shall be binding on the State Board.

An approved waiver or modification may remain in effect for a period not to exceed 5 school years and may be renewed upon application by the school district. However, such waiver or modification may be changed within that 5-year period by a local school district board following the procedure as set forth in this Section for the initial waiver or modification request. If neither the State Board of Education nor the General Assembly disapproves, the change is deemed granted.

On or before February 1, 1998, and each year thereafter, the State Board of Education shall submit a cumulative report summarizing all types of waiver mandates and modifications of mandates granted by the State Board or the General Assembly. The report shall identify the topic of the waiver along with the number and percentage of school districts for which the waiver has been granted. The report shall also include any recommendations from the State Board regarding the repeal or modification of waived mandates.

(Source: P.A. 89-3, eff. 2-27-95; 89-626, eff. 8-9-96; 90-62, eff. 7-3-97; 90-462, eff. 8-17-97; 90-655, eff. 7-30-98.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.