

## H. 840 Talking Points

- This bill proposes to establish a Community Educational Accountability Program through which each school district develops and implements its own unique community accountability plan. Each plan would have three facets:
  - compliance - both federal and state
  - internal metrics and tools for use by staff
  - and the outcomes of a local stakeholder process which measures educational success according to specific goals and values identified by the community.
- H. 840 started with a couple of questions a parent or concerned citizen might ask:
  - What does success look like in my local school, or schools?
  - How would we measure that success?
- For a variety of reasons, the systems available to average citizens to answer these questions are deficient, and this deficiency exacerbates the conflicts within the debate over educational governance and finances. It also has an impact on parent and community engagement, parental choices about public school participation and on the evaluation of the role of the Agency.
- Parents and communities have trouble finding meaning in a system where the messages on performance are confusing. AYPs and standardized testing have not told the story of success in a way that improves engagement. We are heading towards 100% failure in terms of AYP, yet we score well against other states and, in some measures, we score well against the rest of the world. Which message should a parent use and how does a parent reconcile these conflicting messages? This is why the bill proposes a new process to address the two questions, *What does success look like?* and *How do we measure it?* The local plan tells the story in a way which fits the values and understanding of the community which needs to know?
- Parent engagement has declined in the NCLB era as parents have felt increasingly disempowered by a system steered by, and accountable to, national forces out of their control. Deep engagement happens when the opportunity to make an impact is real and attainable - this is universally true, not just in education. Disengagement is a sign of disempowerment, which is why the bill's process for developing the local plan includes all stakeholder groups and ties the reporting to the annual budget cycle.
- The role of the AoE is distorted by system pressures, both national and state-led, which leads to unreasonable expectations about who is accountable for educational outcomes and how those outcomes are delivered. By pushing the accountability to the level at which education improvement happens, the bill reframes the roles and responsibilities within the system. While there are roles that the AoE *must* play for federal compliance, its primary mission should be to provide technical support, data collection and data integrity, and to support collaboration and peer learning. Absent, by design, is any notion that the Agency itself can deliver outcomes.
- The bill is in harmony with the Balanced Accountability Model, in that the three levels of a local plan can encompass the components of the Balanced Accountability Model including: statewide assessments, internal metrics such as performance assessments, standards-based evaluations for educator quality and the inspectorate model, and locally significant measures, informed by surveys and developed within a robust process for building local engagement.
- The bill also includes measures to improve the pool of data available for accountability plans, by mandating a near-term plan to get to a universal chart of accounts and a place-holder allocation to stand-in for the necessary policy conversation about what it will take to upgrade the technology systems of some schools who are likely not ready to implement new accounting systems.