

Legislative Analysis



MODIFY PUPIL COUNT DAY DATES FOR RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES OR HOLIDAYS

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4648 as reported from committee

Sponsor: Rep. Noah Arbit

Committee: Education

Complete to 9-13-23

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4648 would amend sections 6 and 6a of the School Aid Act to allow a school district or intermediate school district (ISD) to use an alternate day for counting pupils if a required count day falls on a date there is a religious observance or holiday. If the date falls on a religious observance or holiday, then the district would have to use the next school day following that observance or holiday as its count day.

The bill would also modify a provision allowing a supplemental pupil count day for school districts that are not in session on the second Wednesday in February due to a condition that is beyond the superintendent's control to use the next day the district is in session as the supplemental count day. The bill would amend this to allow an ISD to do the same, and to also stipulate that if the supplemental count day would fall on the date of a religious observance or holiday, then the supplemental count day must be the day following the religious observance or holiday.

Finally, the bill would amend the definition of *pupil membership count day* to reflect this change. *Pupil membership count day* is presently defined as either the first Wednesday in October for each school year or, for schools following a year-round schedule, one of the following days:

- Fourth Wednesday in July.
- First Wednesday in October.
- Second Wednesday in February.
- Fourth Wednesday in April.

The bill would modify this definition by adding that if one of these days falls on a day for which there is a religious observance or holiday, then the pupil membership count day is the immediately following day on which school is in session in the district or building.

MCL 388.1606 and 388.1606a

BACKGROUND:

Under current law, conditions that are beyond a superintendent's control are generally considered weather events or unplanned closures of a school facility due to an infrastructure issue such as power outage or water main break. For districts where students are absent on a designated count day, that district may still count those students, but using an alternate method. The bill would have the effect of allowing a district to be able to more easily count its students by using a single designated count day as provided in the bill, rather than the alternate method,

which includes students needing to attend for 10 consecutive days immediately following the regularly designated count day and other criteria.

The bill would likely have little fiscal impact on the state or on school districts, ISDs, or public school academies (PSAs, or charter schools). Under current law, a pupil who is absent on pupil count day but attends classes within a certain time period after the count day may be counted under the alternative counting provisions under section 6(8) of the School Aid Act.

POSITIONS:

The following entities indicated support for the bill (6-13-23):

- Michigan Department of Education
- Oakland Schools
- Michigan Association of Secondary School Principals
- Washtenaw Intermediate School District
- West Bloomfield School District
- Ann Arbor Public Schools
- Jewish Community Relations Council & American Jewish Committee of Detroit
- Education Advocates of West Michigan
- Michigan Education Association

Legislative Analyst: Josh Roesner
Fiscal Analysts: Jacqueline Mullen
Noel Benson

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.