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HOUSE BILL NO. 947

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
(Proposed by the Senate Committee on Education and Health
on March 7, 1994)

(Patron Prior to Substitute—Delegate Cranwell)

A BILL to amend the Code of Virginia by adding sections numbered 22.1-199.1 and 22.1-276.01, relating to increasing educational opportunities.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding sections numbered 22.1-199.1 and 22.1-276.01 as follows:

§ 22.1-199.1. Program for improving educational opportunities.

In recognition of the importance of setting long-term educational improvement goals and the significance of early childhood education, educational technology, and parental and community involvement, the General Assembly establishes the following objectives:

1. By the year 2000, the General Assembly shall seek to ensure that licensed instructional personnel shall be assigned by each school board in a manner that produces divisionwide ratios of students in average daily membership to full-time equivalent teaching positions in grades kindergarten through three, excluding special education teachers, principals, assistant principals, counselors, and librarians, that are not greater than the following: a statewide ratio of twenty to one and a targeted ratio of sixteen to one in schools with high concentrations of at-risk students.

2. Effective July 1, 1995, the availability of voluntary programs for at-risk four-year-old children shall be increased as provided in the appropriation act.

3. Effective July 1, 1994, access to educational technology shall be expanded as set forth in the appropriation act. "Educational technology" means distance learning, integrated learning systems (ILS), multimedia library packages, laptop computer loan programs, vocational technology/diversified technology laboratories (DTL), or other electronic techniques designed to enhance education and teacher training in the use of instructional technology.

4. Effective July 1, 1994, with such funds as are appropriated for this purpose, incentives for parental and community involvement shall be strengthened as set forth in § 22.1-276.01.

§ 22.1-276.01. Parental responsibility and involvement requirements.

A. Within three weeks of the beginning of the school year, school boards shall send, simultaneously with any other materials customarily distributed at that time, to the parents, guardians, or other persons having control or charge of each enrolled student, a notice of the requirements of this section.

B. Upon the request of the principal of the student's school, the parent, guardian, or other person having control or charge of an enrolled student shall:

1. Meet with the child's homeroom teacher or the school's principal, assistant principal, or other designated licensed school personnel to review the school board's standards of student conduct and discuss the parent's and the teacher's or other school official's expectations of the child. The teacher or other school official shall explain the school board's disciplinary policies and inform the parent of the parent's responsibility to assist the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order; and

2. Sign a statement acknowledging the requirements of the school board's standards of student conduct and recognizing his responsibility to assist the school in disciplining the student and maintaining order.

C. School boards may require that, prior to being readmitted to the regular school program, a suspended student and his parents shall meet with school officials to discuss improvement of the student's behavior.

A school board may notify the parents, guardians or other persons having control or charge of any student who violates a school board policy and is assigned a penalty of in-school or out-of-school suspension of the date and particulars of the violation, of the requirement that the parents accompany the student to meet with school officials, and of the obligation of the parents to take actions to improve the student's behavior.

D. Upon the failure of a parent to accompany a suspended student to meet with school officials, or upon the student's receiving a second suspension or being expelled, school boards may require the attendance officer to make complaint in the name of the Commonwealth before the juvenile and domestic relations district court or any successor in interest of that court. Any child suspended two or more times during a single school year who is the subject of such complaint shall be deemed to be a "child in need of supervision" who is habitually and without justification absent from school pursuant to Chapter 11 (§ 16.1-226 et seq.) of Title 16.1, and the child and his parents shall be subject to the provisions of § 16.1-278.5.

60 *E. A school board shall provide opportunities for parental and community involvement in every*
61 *school in the school division.*