

AN ACT concerning education.

**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 1A-8 as follows:

(105 ILCS 5/1A-8) (from Ch. 122, par. 1A-8)

Sec. 1A-8. Powers of the Board in Assisting Districts Deemed in Financial Difficulties. To promote the financial integrity of school districts, the State Board of Education shall be provided the necessary powers to promote sound financial management and continue operation of the public schools.

The State Superintendent of Education may require a school district, including any district subject to Article 34A of this Code, to share financial information relevant to a proper investigation of the district's financial condition and the delivery of appropriate State financial, technical, and consulting services to the district if the district (i) has been designated, through the State Board of Education's School District Financial Profile System, as on financial warning or financial watch status, (ii) has failed to file an annual financial report, annual budget, deficit reduction plan, or other financial information as required by law, or (iii) has

been identified, through the district's annual audit or other financial and management information, as in serious financial difficulty in the current or next school year. In addition to financial, technical, and consulting services provided by the State Board of Education, at the request of a school district, the State Superintendent may provide for an independent financial consultant to assist the district review its financial condition and options.

The State Board of Education, after proper investigation of a district's financial condition, may certify that a district, including any district subject to Article 34A, is in financial difficulty when any of the following conditions occur:

- (1) The district has issued school or teacher orders for wages as permitted in Sections 8-16, 32-7.2 and 34-76 of this Code;

- (2) The district has issued tax anticipation warrants or tax anticipation notes in anticipation of a second year's taxes when warrants or notes in anticipation of current year taxes are still outstanding, as authorized by Sections 17-16, 34-23, 34-59 and 34-63 of this Code, or has issued short-term debt against 2 future revenue sources, such as, but not limited to, tax anticipation warrants and general State Aid certificates or tax anticipation warrants and revenue anticipation notes;

- (3) The district has for 2 consecutive years shown an excess of expenditures and other financing uses over

revenues and other financing sources and beginning fund balances on its annual financial report for the aggregate totals of the Educational, Operations and Maintenance, Transportation, and Working Cash Funds;

(4) The district refuses to provide financial information or cooperate with the State Superintendent in an investigation of the district's financial condition.

No school district shall be certified by the State Board of Education to be in financial difficulty solely by reason of any of the above circumstances arising as a result of (i) the failure of the county to make any distribution of property tax money due the district at the time such distribution is due or (ii) the failure of this State to make timely payments of general State aid or any of the mandated categoricals; or if the district clearly demonstrates to the satisfaction of the State Board of Education at the time of its determination that such condition no longer exists. If the State Board of Education certifies that a district in a city with 500,000 inhabitants or more is in financial difficulty, the State Board shall so notify the Governor and the Mayor of the city in which the district is located. The State Board of Education may require school districts certified in financial difficulty, except those districts subject to Article 34A, to develop, adopt and submit a financial plan within 45 days after certification of financial difficulty. The financial plan shall be developed according to guidelines presented to the

district by the State Board of Education within 14 days of certification. Such guidelines shall address the specific nature of each district's financial difficulties. Any proposed budget of the district shall be consistent with the financial plan submitted to and approved by the State Board of Education.

A district certified to be in financial difficulty, other than a district subject to Article 34A, shall report to the State Board of Education at such times and in such manner as the State Board may direct, concerning the district's compliance with each financial plan. The State Board may review the district's operations, obtain budgetary data and financial statements, require the district to produce reports, and have access to any other information in the possession of the district that it deems relevant. The State Board may issue recommendations or directives within its powers to the district to assist in compliance with the financial plan. The district shall produce such budgetary data, financial statements, reports and other information and comply with such directives. If the State Board of Education determines that a district has failed to comply with its financial plan, the State Board of Education may rescind approval of the plan and appoint a Financial Oversight Panel for the district as provided in Section 1B-4. This action shall be taken only after the district has been given notice and an opportunity to appear before the State Board of Education to discuss its failure to comply with its financial plan.

No bonds, notes, teachers orders, tax anticipation warrants or other evidences of indebtedness shall be issued or sold by a school district or be legally binding upon or enforceable against a local board of education of a district certified to be in financial difficulty unless and until the financial plan required under this Section has been approved by the State Board of Education.

Any financial profile compiled and ~~watch list~~ distributed by the State Board of Education in Fiscal Year 2009 or any fiscal year thereafter ~~pursuant to this Section~~ shall incorporate such adjustments as may be needed in the profile scores to reflect the financial effects of the ~~designate those school districts on the watch list that would not otherwise be on the watch list were it not for the~~ inability or refusal of the State of Illinois to make timely disbursements of any general State aid or mandated categorical aid payments due school districts or to fully reimburse school districts for mandated categorical programs pursuant to reimbursement formulas provided in this School Code.

(Source: P.A. 94-234, eff. 7-1-06.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect July 1, 2009.