

HOUSE BILL NO. 4961

September 07, 2023, Introduced by Reps. Rogers, Dievendorf, Tsernoglou, Price, Hood, Wilson, Andrews, Morgan, Steckloff, Brabec, O'Neal, Paiz, Morse, Breen, Young, McFall, Grant, Rheingans, Glanville, Edwards, MacDonell, Hope, Farhat, Miller, Scott, Snyder, Skaggs, Puri, Weiss, McKinney and Aiyash and referred to the Committee on Education.

A bill to amend 1976 PA 451, entitled
"The revised school code,"
(MCL 380.1 to 380.1852) by adding section 1159.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 **Sec. 1159. (1) The environmental literacy task force is**
2 **created as a temporary commission described in section 4 of article**
3 **V of the state constitution of 1963. The department shall provide**
4 **staffing and support for the environmental literacy task force.**
5 **(2) The environmental literacy task force must consist of 13**

1 members as follows:

2 (a) The superintendent of public instruction or the
3 superintendent of public instruction's designee.

4 (b) The director of the department of environment, Great
5 Lakes, and energy or the director's designee.

6 (c) One member representing the water resources division of
7 the department of environment, Great Lakes, and energy, as
8 appointed by the director of that department.

9 (d) The director of the department of natural resources or the
10 director's designee.

11 (e) One member representing the parks and recreation division
12 of the department of natural resources, as appointed by the
13 director of that department.

14 (f) One member representing the wildlife division of the
15 department of natural resources, as appointed by the director of
16 that department.

17 (g) One member representing the forest resources division of
18 the department of natural resources, as appointed by the director
19 of that department.

20 (h) One member representing the fisheries division of the
21 department of natural resources, as appointed by the director of
22 that department.

23 (i) The director of the department of agriculture and rural
24 development or the director's designee.

25 (j) A representative of the Michigan Science Teachers
26 Association.

27 (k) A representative of the Michigan Association of School
28 Administrators.

29 (l) A representative of the Michigan Association of Secondary

1 School Principals.

2 (m) A representative of the Michigan Elementary and Middle
3 School Principals Association.

4 (3) The members first appointed to or serving as designees on
5 the environmental literacy task force must be appointed or
6 designated within 30 days after the effective date of the
7 amendatory act that added this section.

8 (4) If a vacancy occurs on the environmental literacy task
9 force, the official who appointed or designated the member who
10 vacated shall appoint or designate a replacement in the same manner
11 as the original appointment or designation.

12 (5) The superintendent of public instruction shall call the
13 first meeting of the environmental literacy task force within 60
14 days after the effective date of the amendatory act that added this
15 section. At the first meeting, the environmental literacy task
16 force shall elect from among its members a chairperson and other
17 officers as it considers necessary or appropriate. After the first
18 meeting, the environmental literacy task force shall meet at times
19 and places specified by the chairperson or a majority of its
20 members.

21 (6) A majority of the members of the environmental literacy
22 task force constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at a
23 meeting of the environmental literacy task force. A majority of the
24 members present and serving are required for official action of the
25 environmental literacy task force.

26 (7) The business that the environmental literacy task force
27 performs must be conducted at a public meeting of the environmental
28 literacy task force held in compliance with the open meetings act,
29 1976 PA 267, MCL 15.261 to 15.275.

1 (8) A writing prepared, owned, used, in the possession of, or
2 retained by the environmental literacy task force in the
3 performance of an official function is subject to the freedom of
4 information act, 1976 PA 442, MCL 15.231 to 15.246.

5 (9) Members of the environmental literacy task force serve
6 without compensation but may be reimbursed for their actual and
7 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official
8 duties as members of the environmental literacy task force.

9 (10) The department, the department of environment, Great
10 Lakes, and energy, the department of natural resources, and the
11 department of agriculture and rural development shall assist the
12 environmental literacy task force in the performance of its
13 official duties and functions, including, but not limited to,
14 providing the environmental literacy task force with advice and
15 information that is not protected as confidential under applicable
16 law.

17 (11) The environmental literacy task force shall do all of the
18 following:

19 (a) Develop an environmental literacy model curriculum
20 designed to accomplish the following goals:

21 (i) Prepare students for understanding and addressing
22 environmental challenges of this state and the United States,
23 including the relationship of the environment to national security,
24 energy sources, climate change, health risks, and natural
25 disasters.

26 (ii) Contribute to students' healthy lifestyles by making
27 outdoor experiences part of the regular school curriculum and
28 creating programs that promote healthy lifestyles through outdoor
29 recreation and proper nutrition.

1 (iii) Create opportunities for enhanced and ongoing professional
2 development of teachers that improves teachers' knowledge of
3 environmental issues and teaching skills related to those issues in
4 settings inside and outside of the classroom.

5 (iv) Recommend improvements to existing environmental
6 curricula, including the Michigan environmental education
7 curriculum support, Michigan environmental literacy plan, and next
8 generation science standards. The environmental literacy task force
9 shall assess the extent to which the existing curricula are
10 implemented in this state, address environmental literacy, and meet
11 literacy goals.

12 (v) Teach students about 21st century jobs, growing
13 industries, and ways to protect and improve the environment by
14 including in the model curriculum instruction on alternative
15 energy, renewable fuels, material science, energy-saving
16 technology, low-impact development, and buildings certified in
17 leadership in energy and environmental design (LEED) or buildings
18 meeting a substantially similar standard.

19 (b) Identify and make recommendations on all of the following
20 to achieve the goals of the environmental literacy model
21 curriculum:

22 (i) Applicable academic content standards, content areas, and
23 courses or subjects.

24 (ii) The relationship between the environmental literacy model
25 curriculum and high school graduation requirements.

26 (iii) Standards used by the department to measure the
27 environmental literacy of students.

28 (iv) Professional development programs that improve teachers'
29 knowledge of environmental issues and teaching skills relating to

1 those issues in settings inside and outside of the classroom.

2 (v) Definitions for key terms that must be addressed in the
3 environmental literacy model curriculum, including the following
4 terms:

5 (A) Environmental literacy.

6 (B) Climate change.

7 (C) Healthy lifestyle.

8 (vi) How to implement the environmental literacy model
9 curriculum, including recommendations regarding funding sources and
10 other necessary supports.

11 (vii) How to encourage educational agencies and schools to
12 participate in programs that do the following:

13 (A) Improve teachers' knowledge of environmental issues and
14 teaching skills relating to those issues in settings inside and
15 outside of the classroom.

16 (B) Treat the development of teachers' environmental knowledge
17 and related teaching skills as a career-long process that
18 encourages teachers' intellectual growth and teaching proficiency
19 regarding environmental issues.

20 (C) Develop a teacher training curriculum that focuses on
21 environmental education and is aligned with applicable academic
22 content standards.

23 (D) Allow students to directly experience the outdoors by
24 providing environmental education experiences that are based on
25 outdoor activities and that use outdoor facilities.

26 (E) Incorporate field-based learning, place-based learning,
27 service learning, outdoor learning, or experimental learning.

28 (F) Integrate environmental education into the curriculum by
29 training teachers and administrators how to use field-based

1 learning, place-based learning, service learning, outdoor learning,
2 and experimental learning and by encouraging and supporting
3 teachers to use the training in the curriculum.

4 (G) Provide activities and programs that advance environmental
5 education, including interdisciplinary courses that integrate the
6 study of natural, social, and economic systems and the use of the
7 environment as an integrating theme for a school curriculum.

8 (c) Seek input from a variety of sources to develop the
9 environmental literacy model curriculum to ensure that the
10 curriculum is based on equally weighted viewpoints in furtherance
11 of critical thinking and analysis regarding environmental literacy.

12 (d) Before submitting the report under subdivision (e), in a
13 form and manner considered appropriate by the environmental
14 literacy task force, provide public notice of the environmental
15 literacy model curriculum and an opportunity for public comment
16 during a 30-day period. In addition, the environmental literacy
17 task force shall provide individual notice of the environmental
18 literacy model curriculum and the 30-day public comment period to
19 nonprofit organizations and local parks and recreation associations
20 that advance environmental education in this state and, as
21 determined appropriate by the environmental literacy task force,
22 any other interested person involved in forming or implementing
23 policies regarding education, business, or the environment. After
24 the 30-day public comment period but before submitting the report
25 under subdivision (e) and as considered necessary by the
26 environmental literacy task force, the environmental literacy task
27 force shall modify the environmental literacy model curriculum and
28 any information identified and recommendations developed under this
29 section.

1 (e) After notice and an opportunity for public comment are
2 provided under subdivision (d) but not later than 1 year after the
3 effective date of the amendatory act that added this section,
4 submit a report to the standing committees of the legislature
5 responsible for K to 12 education legislation. The report must
6 include the environmental literacy model curriculum developed under
7 this subsection and any other information identified by the
8 environmental literacy task force under this subsection and may
9 include recommendations for legislation regarding the environmental
10 literacy model curriculum.

11 Enacting section 1. This amendatory act takes effect 90 days
12 after the date it is enacted into law.