Dissolving school boards now a reality

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Senate bill 201, Act 44

• Signs of increased state control for past several years
• Locally elected school boards may be dissolved
• Voter disenfranchisement
• Once part of comprehensive bill that failed to pass
State accountability changes

- Signed into law May 17, 2021, effective July 1, 2022
- Directs a tiered system of assistance developed by SCDE
- Revises criteria triggering state assistance and/or intervention for schools, districts
- Revises criteria for the state take over management of schools, districts
- New provision establishes process for dissolving school boards in certain districts

School level accountability

- ‘Underperforming’ rated unsatisfactory or below average
- Placed into tiered assistance system, turnaround plan
- ‘Chronically underperforming’ rated unsatisfactory or below average for three consecutive years
- Takeover criteria: chronically underperforming, accreditation denied, insufficient turnaround results
- State board approval, notification requirements, appeal process
- NEW – seek SBE approval every 3 years or reverts back to district control
District level accountability

• ‘Underperforming’ 65% or more schools rated unsatisfactory or below average
• Placed into tiered assistance system, turnaround plan
• Takeover criteria:
  • unperforming for 3 consecutive years
  • accreditation denied
  • insufficient turnaround results
  • fiscal emergency status OR fiscal mismanagement resulting in deficit
• State board approval, notification requirements, appeal process
• Local school board is dissolved

District under state management

• State management can mean as much as 8 to 10 years or more
• Local fiscal authority transferred to county council
• Must have 3 consecutive, sustained years of improvement
• Appointed 5-member interim board serve a minimum of 3 years
• Transition plan, process for returning district to local control