

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5437

C 413 L 03
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Allowing all parties to appeal from adverse decisions of school district regional committees.

Sponsors: Senators Benton, Schmidt, Zarelli, Shin, Carlson, Stevens and West.

Senate Committee on Education
House Committee on Education

Background: The Legislature does not establish school district boundaries but has created a petitioning process to regional committees to address changes in school district boundaries. To initiate a change, a petition must be signed by at least 10 percent of the registered voters residing in the territory proposed to be transferred or by a majority of the members of the board of directors of one of the districts affected by the change. Regional committees operate in each of the nine Educational Service Districts (ESDs). The regional committee members are registered voters of the ESD who are elected by the boards of directors of the school districts located in the ESD. The regional committee uses stipulated criteria to review petitions to change school district boundaries.

Currently, only regional committee decisions to change a school district boundary may be appealed to the State Board of Education (SBE). The appeal must be filed within 30 days of the regional committee's final decision. If the regional committee's decision is to maintain the boundaries, then there is no appeal available through the SBE. There is statutory authorization to appeal any decision to the superior court in the appropriate county.

Summary: The percentage of voters necessary to initiate a petition to change school district boundaries is increased from 10 percent to 50 percent plus one of the voters in the affected areas. Additionally, the voters must be active voters. Regional committee decisions to deny a change in school district boundaries may be appealed to the State Board of Education.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	2	
House	93	5	(House amended)
Senate	46	1	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 27, 2003