

HB 1358 -- ST. JOSEPH SCHOOL DISTRICT OVERSIGHT BOARD

SPONSOR: Johnson

This bill establishes an oversight board to study school district performance in the St. Joseph School District. The board must focus on factors leading to the state auditor's classification of the school district's performance as "poor" during the state audit released in February 2015, including, but not limited to, the use of school district moneys by the superintendent and the district's chief operating officer and concerns over general financial control within the district.

The oversight board membership will be comprised of nine members appointed by the Commissioner of Education through an application process developed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. No member may be currently serving on a school board and at least five members must have a minimum of five years of experience in the field of education and at least two members must be certified public accountants. All members must be appointed no later than September 15, 2015. Membership may include, but not be limited to, representatives of local government; school administrators; teachers; and parents of children in the school district.

The Commissioner or the Commissioner's designee must convene the first meeting of the board for the purpose of establishing the bylaws of the board and electing officers to include a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. All meetings of the oversight board must be conducted in Buchanan County.

The first meeting of the oversight board must be conducted no later than October 1, 2015. At the first meeting, the oversight board must draft a mission statement to ensure all recommendations of the state audit are being implemented. Within 15 days of each meeting of the oversight board, the board must prepare a written report to be submitted to the Commissioner of Education detailing the steps that are being taken to following the state auditor's report and recommendations.

The oversight committee must meet once a month for 12 months until October, 1, 2016, at which point in the time the board must begin meeting every three months for the next year. Beginning October 1, 2017, the board must meet once every six months. The oversight board must submit its final recommendations to the department by October 1, 2018, and at that time the oversight board will be dissolved.