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BILL: Senate Bill 618  
TITLE: Education – Achievement School District - Establishment  
DATE: March 8, 2017  
POSITION: OPPOSE  
COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
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Senate Bill 618 establishes the Achievement School District in the State Department of Education; specifying the purpose of the Achievement School District is to transform into high quality public schools all public schools in the State determined by the Department to enroll students whose academic performance ranks in the lowest 5% in the State; specifying criteria for the absorption of specified public schools into the Achievement School District; requiring a local school system to cooperate, as specified.

PSSAM strongly **opposes** Senate Bill 618.

Local superintendents, working with our local school boards, strongly believe in local autonomy and authority over our public schools. This proposed legislation diminishes the authority of local superintendents and boards of education. In essence, Senate Bill 618 creates a 25<sup>th</sup> local system to be known as the Achievement School District that is governed by a Headmaster and held accountable to a separate school board, to be known as the Achievement School Board.

PSSAM opposes every measure that removes our governing authority to oversee our public schools. We place the very highest priority on raising the achievement level of all students and schools in our local system. Working directly with our local school boards, we put a laser focus on low performing schools to raise the aggregate student achievement of every student. We work tirelessly to achieve that goal.

As local superintendents, we diligently work with our educators, students, parents, businesses, elected officials, and the community-at-large to turn around low performing schools. We analyze all available data, research best practices both within our school system and on the state and national level, and work to develop educational policies and strong instructional practices that will raise student and school achievement.

We do not see any tangible value in the creation of the Achievement School District. We believe that this is a costly investment of taxpayer dollars that will not succeed. We believe that as local superintendents, with the necessary funds, support, and input from all of our stakeholders, we will succeed and make a difference for our students in low performing schools.

For the reasons noted above, PSSAM **opposes** SB 618.