

# Legislative Analysis

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## INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT START DATE

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**House Bill 5977 as introduced**  
**Sponsor: Rep. John Moolenaar**  
**Committee: Education**

### First Analysis (5-23-06)

**BRIEF SUMMARY:** The bill would allow intermediate school districts to provide programs and services to their constituent districts if they began their school year before Labor Day.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The bill would have no fiscal impact.

### **THE APPARENT PROBLEM:**

In 2005 the legislature amended the Revised School Code to ensure that the school year began after the Labor Day weekend. There were, however, three exceptions allowed. School districts could start earlier if they offered year-around schooling or if their students enrolled in a rigorous academic program known as the international baccalaureate. In addition, an earlier start was allowed until any collectively bargained agreement expired that stipulated a school-start before Labor Day.

Under the 2005 law, the post-Labor Day school-start applies to all public schools including charter schools, and also to intermediate school districts (ISD).

The Midland Educational Service Agency—one of Michigan's 54 ISDs—serves four local Midland county school districts—a total of 15,000 students. Like most, the Midland ISD provides programs and services for vocational education and special education students throughout the region it serves. Two of the ISD's four constituent districts—serving about three-quarters of all the students in the region—have collectively bargained agreements that stipulate school must start on August 23. Their contracts do not expire until 2007. The remaining two local school districts have adopted the post-Labor Day start, as required under the new law.

In order that the ISD and others like it can serve the career, vocational education, and special education students from the local districts with early school start dates, legislation has been introduced allowing ISDs to begin offering services before Labor Day.

### **THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:**

House Bill 5977 would amend the Revised School Code (MCL 380.1284b) to allow an exception to the post-Labor Day starting date requirement for intermediate school districts. The bill would allow an ISD to provide programs and services to a school district or a public school academy according to the calendar of the local school district or PSA, if the local district or academy begins its school year before Labor Day.

Currently under the law, the students in all school districts and charter schools cannot be required to begin a school year before Labor Day (which falls on the first Monday in September). However, the law allows exceptions to this rule if a district operates a year-

round school, or an international baccalaureate academy providing 1,160 hours of instruction each school year, or, initially, if a collective bargaining contract was in effect that stipulated otherwise.

House Bill 5977 modifies the law in two ways. First, it would require that a school district's public school academy's school year not begin before Labor Day (rather than stipulating that pupils cannot be required to begin their school year before Labor Day).

Second, House Bill 5977 specifies that an ISD could provide programs or services according to a constituent school district's or a charter school's calendar if the school year began before Labor Day for any of the reasons cited above. Under the bill, an earlier ISD start would be allowed if an intermediate district 1) contracted with an early starting constituent school district or charter school to provide programs or services; 2) operated a program or service within a building owned by an early starting constituent district or charter school located within the ISD boundaries; or 3) otherwise provided instructional programs or services for students of an early starting constituent district or charter school.

### ***ARGUMENTS:***

#### ***For:***

The state's intermediate school districts (ISDs) offer vocational and special education services to the students who attend the local school districts located within the ISD services areas. Like school districts throughout the state, ISDs are prohibited from beginning the school year before Labor Day Weekend, following a law passed by the legislature in 2005. However, that law allowed local school districts, but not ISDs, to start school before Labor Day in a limited number of circumstances.

When local school districts start school before Labor Day—following exceptions allowed in a law—the intermediate school districts should be able to provide services to the students enrolled in them. This legislation would allow them to do so.

### ***POSITIONS:***

The Michigan Association of School Administrators and the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators support the bill. (5-17-06)

The Midland County Education Services Agency supports the bill. (5-17-06)

The Michigan Education Association supports the bill. (5-17-06)

The Northern Michigan School Legislative Association supports the bill. (5-17-06)

The Michigan Department of Education is neutral on the bill. (5-17-06)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.