

RCW 28A.315.205 Transfer of territory or dissolution by petition

~~—Regional committee responsibilities—Rules—Appeals.~~ (1) The chair of the regional committee shall schedule a hearing on the proposed transfer of territory or dissolution petition at a location in the educational service district within sixty calendar days of being notified under RCW 28A.315.199 (3) or (4).

(2) Within thirty calendar days of the hearing under subsection (1) of this section, or final hearing if more than one is held by the committee, the committee shall issue its written findings and decision to approve or disapprove the proposed transfer of territory or the dissolution and annexation of a financially insolvent district. The educational service district superintendent shall transmit a copy of the committee's decision to the superintendents of the affected school districts within ten calendar days.

(3) In carrying out the purposes of RCW 28A.315.015 and in making decisions as authorized under RCW 28A.315.095(1), the regional committee shall base its judgment upon whether and to the extent the proposed change in school district organization complies with RCW 28A.315.015(2) and rules adopted by the superintendent of public instruction under chapter 34.05 RCW.

(4) The rules under subsection (3) of this section shall provide for giving consideration to all of the following:

(a) Student educational opportunities as measured by the percentage of students performing at each level of the statewide mandated assessments and data regarding student attendance, graduation, and dropout rates;

(b) The safety and welfare of pupils. For the purposes of this subsection, "safety" means freedom or protection from danger, injury, or damage and "welfare" means a positive condition or influence regarding health, character, and well-being;

(c) The history and relationship of the property affected to the students and communities affected, including, for example, the impact of the growth management act and current or proposed urban growth areas, city boundaries, and master planned communities;

(d) Whether or not geographic accessibility warrants a favorable consideration of a recommended change in school district organization, including remoteness or isolation of places of residence and time required to travel to and from school; and

(e) All funding sources of the affected districts, equalization among school districts of the tax burden for general fund and capital purposes through a reduction in disparities in per pupil valuation when all funding sources are considered, improvement in the economies in the administration and operation of schools, and the extent the proposed change would potentially reduce or increase the individual and aggregate transportation costs of the affected school districts.

(5) (a) (i) A petitioner or school district may appeal a decision by the regional committee to the superintendent of public instruction based on the claim that the regional committee failed to follow the applicable statutory and regulatory procedures or acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner. Any such appeal shall be based on the record and the appeal must be filed within thirty days of the final decision of the regional committee. The appeal shall be heard and determined by an administrative law judge in the office of administrative hearings, based on the standards in (a)(ii) of this subsection.

(ii) If the administrative law judge finds that all applicable procedures were not followed or that the regional committee acted in an arbitrary and capricious manner, the administrative law judge shall refer the matter back to the regional committee with an explanation of his or her findings. The regional committee shall rehear the proposal.

(iii) If the administrative law judge finds that all applicable procedures were followed or that the regional committee did not act in an arbitrary and capricious manner, depending on the appeal, the educational service district shall be notified and directed to implement the changes.

(iv) The administrative law judge shall expedite review and issuance of a decision on an appeal of a decision approving the dissolution and annexation of a financially insolvent district.

(b) Any school district or citizen petitioner affected by a final decision of the regional committee may seek judicial review of the committee's decision in accordance with RCW 34.05.570. Judicial review of a regional committee decision approving dissolution and annexation of a financially insolvent district must be expedited. [2012 c 186 § 6; 2008 c 159 § 2; 2006 c 263 § 503; 2003 c 413 § 1; 1999 c 315 § 402.]

Effective date—2012 c 186: See note following RCW 28A.315.025.

Findings—Purpose—Part headings not law—2006 c 263: See notes following RCW 28A.150.230.