**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND CHAPTER 17, TITLE 59 OF THE 1976 CODE, RELATING TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS, BY ADDING SECTION 59‑17‑45, TO PROVIDE CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT CONSOLIDATION, AND TO PROVIDE FOR AN EXCEPTION.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Chapter 17, Title 59 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding:

“Section 59‑17‑45. (A) Beginning with the 2020-2021 school year, school districts in this State that meet at least two of the following criteria and are in a single county shall be consolidated within the county boundaries in which the districts are located. Districts shall be consolidated if:

(1) the average daily membership of the district is less than one thousand five hundred members;

(2) the school district contains a school with an accreditation status of probation or denied;

(3) the school district is currently under state designation of Fiscal Caution or Warning pursuant to Section 59‑20‑90; or

(4) the district has a risk assessment of medium or high or has a school or schools that have been in improvement status for three years.

(B) This section does not apply to a school district that is the only school district in a county.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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