Bill would remove 'distressed' label from Muncie schools, increase state $
But the state's contract with the emergency manager in charge of Gary schools "may serve as an example of the potential compensation," according to the Legislative Services Agency.

The base compensation of the Gary emergency manager ranges from $2.75 million a year to $3.25 million a year over the next three years, with performance incentives ranging from $650,000 to $950,000 per year.

Administrator Assistance, the emergency manager in charge of finances and academics at Muncie schools, signed a $300,000 contract for the last six months of 2017. But that was a limited role. The firm was given total control of the district on Jan. 1 and has brought in more consultants.

For example, Steve Edwards, in charge of day-to-day emergency management of MCS, recently announced he had appointed John Williams as his chief of staff, Williams is a retired superintendent from Rushville and Delphi.

The author of House Bill 1315, Rep. Tim Brown, R-Crawfordsville, who chairs the Ways and Means Committee, has until midnight of next Monday to move the bill out of the House. It would then be assigned to a Senate committee for further action. Republicans hold super-majorities in both houses of the Legislature.

Currently, the governing body of Muncie schools is a five-member elected school board. Under HB 1315, Ball State would appoint a seven-member school board. Two of the seven would be nominated by the mayor and city council.

Amendments filed by House Democrats include those that would:

• Require members of the school board to reside in the school district.

• Subject the school district to collective bargaining unless Ball State affirmatively provides that the school is not subject to collective bargaining. Muncie school teachers currently have collective bargaining rights to negotiate their wages and other benefits.

• Require Muncie school board members appointed by Ball State to be residents of Delaware County, to file statements of economic interest, to disclose where their spouses are employed, to not hold other public offices, and to not be an employee of BSU or MCS.

• Any reduction in force at Muncie schools could not increase class sizes to more than 1 teacher for every 24 students.

• An interim study committee to determine whether the state's K-12 school funding formula is adequate, irrespective of whether it's equitable.

• Require the state to create a distressed school liquidity fund to provide grants or loans.

• Limit Ball State's role to that of academic advisor to MCS.
• Require the state to provide circuit breaker grants to distressed schools whose property tax revenue has been reduced by tax caps.

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► BSU takeover of Muncie schools? Let's give it a try (http://tspne.ws/2Es9yhj)

► State used stick, not carrot on Muncie schools last year (http://tspne.ws/2CyZdOJ)

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