

HCS HB 297 -- SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT CARDS

SPONSOR: Cunningham, 86 (Pearce)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 14 to 0.

Currently, school districts are required to produce an annual accountability report card for each school building, distribute copies to the households with students, and make copies available to other members of the public upon request. This substitute transfers the responsibility for producing the report card to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, specifying that there will be report cards for each district, each public school building in a district, and each charter school. The report card will be designed to satisfy federal and state statistical disclosure requirements about academic achievement, finances, staff, and other indicators.

The substitute makes changes to the contents of the report card and clarifies existing requirements. The requirement to report participation rates in several programs and activities is removed. The report card must disclose each school that has been identified as a priority school under state law or as needing improvement or requiring specific improvement measures under federal law. Districts must provide the report card information by December 1, or as soon as it is ready, and give preference to distribution methods that will include the information with other important information, such as student report cards.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that if the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) generates the reports instead of the district, it will save districts time and effort. Most of the items being dropped from the existing requirements are ones that DESE does not collect or does not have available in a useful form.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Pearce; Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri School Boards' Association; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri School Administrators Coalition; Missouri Association of Career and Technical Educators; Missouri Press Association; Missouri Broadcasters Association; and Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst