

HCS HB 1273 & 1136 -- SCHOOL FUNDING ADJUSTMENTS

SPONSOR: Baker (123)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Student Achievement and Finance by a vote of 7 to 1.

In the school funding formula scheduled to go into effect July 1, 2006, if the attendance in a summer school program drops more than 15% or a gifted program drops more than 20% during the phase-in period, the school district will have its aid reduced proportionately. This substitute removes the aid reduction for a drop in the summer school enrollment and raises the threshold for the gifted program penalty to a 40% drop. Each school district must identify gifted children and report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education on the district's gifted program, if one exists. Gifted programs remain an option, rather than a mandate.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2007, FY 2008, and FY 2009.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that penalties for summer school and gifted enrollment shortfalls don't take into consideration the variety of reasons a district may have a smaller enrollment. Most superintendents will try to find other places to cut, and teachers and parents feel these programs are essential.

Testifying for the bill were Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City; Missouri National Education Association; Kansas City School District; St. Louis Public Schools Board of Education; Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation; Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis; Missouri School Boards' Association; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri Council of School Administrators; Missouri School Administrators Coalition; Gifted Association of Missouri; Missouri Association of School Business Officials; and Rebecca Smith, Central High School Middle Years Scholars Program and District D Gifted Association of Missouri.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that gifted programs will be the most likely ones to suffer during low budget years. An identifiable funding stream is the best way to prevent cancellation of programs.

Testifying against the bill were Maurice Overlander; Brittany Donnellan; Lauren Kerivan; Raleigh Caverio; Caleb Wiedner; Martha Scott Burton; Mary Katherine Theresa Fanning; Gail Melgren; Amy

Wright Vollmar; Corinne Michelle Char; Bob Jones; Ryan Fanning; Barbara Wait; Ann Luciani; Jane B. Sellars; Peggy Lewis; Orlando V. Hodges; Marie Pesek; Amy Hungerford; Domingo Pacheco; Pam Lewczuk; Susan Iverson; and Richard Lee Burton.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that gifted programs are so important to students' lives that more work must be done to ensure that gifted funding does not become a constant preoccupation.

Others testifying on the bill were Robin Lady; Deborah Kring; Shelley Creed; Meg Mohr; Sue Winter; Janet Baldwin; Michele Kaleel; Kristy Buelter; Linda Smith; Linda Aiken; Edison Schools; Sue Thompson; Juliana C. Moseley; Marilyn Toalson; Susan Schneider; Carrie Ziolkowski; and Newton Learning.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst