

HB 1946 -- REPORTING OF STUDENT ABSENCES

SPONSOR: El-Amin

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

This bill requires the City of St. Louis School District to report to the Children's Division within the Department of Social Services when any student younger than 17 years of age incurs 15 or more absences. The division will contact the parents or guardians regarding the absences and the possibility that they are subject to the educational neglect provisions under Section 210.145, RSMo.

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

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the system needs to reach out sooner to truants and their parents. By the time the police get involved, it's too late to help many of the children who have made bad decisions. Getting parents involved sooner and increasing school attendance may help St. Louis schools solve a couple of their fundamental problems.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives El-Amin and Hubbard; Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis; and Missouri Federation of Teachers and School-Related Personnel.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst