

HB 29 -- ST. LOUIS SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPONSOR: Cunningham (86)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 7 to 5.

This bill restricts the members of the St. Louis Special School District governing council to four two-year terms. Members who have served for eight or more years cannot serve again until at least three other members of the board of education of their school district have served as governing council members or until a total of six years have been served by other members of their board of education. Members in office who no longer qualify must be replaced within 30 days of the effective date of the bill. Governing council members must report the substance of each council meeting to their respective boards of education at the next meeting; and minutes of council meetings will be provided to all member boards of education. Notice of governing council meetings must be posted at local district offices.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the original intent of creating the governing council was to rotate membership to ensure that familiarity with the issues would not be concentrated in just a few people. This has not happened, so the bill is needed.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Cunningham (86).

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that in its history, the council has only had three members who have served for eight years or more. The intent of creating the council was to end a deadlocked, dysfunctional board, which has happened.

Testifying against the bill were Special School District of St. Louis County; Cooperating School Districts of Greater St. Louis; Missouri School Boards Association; and Missouri National Education Association.