

HCS SS#2 SCS SB 161 -- ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Shields (Muschany)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Special Committee on Student Achievement by a vote of 6 to 1.

This substitute changes the laws regarding elementary and secondary education. In its main provisions, the substitute:

- (1) Establishes a rating system based on a program developed by the University of Missouri's Center for Family Policy and Research for early childhood facilities and before- and after-school programs sponsored by school districts. A grant fund with two subaccounts is created for licensed providers and organizations that assist providers in improving quality;
- (2) Changes the laws on school emergency procedures to anticipate a public health emergency such as a pandemic;
- (3) Authorizes the mayor of the City of St. Louis to sponsor charter schools in the city;
- (4) Requires mentoring standards to be established for beginning teachers by June 30, 2008, and establishes benchmarks for quality mentoring programs;
- (5) Makes school districts responsible for the cost of certain postsecondary remedial courses;
- (6) Authorizes students in provisionally accredited or unaccredited districts to enroll in neighboring districts under certain circumstances and establishes procedures for handling issues such as state aid, assessment, and athletics;
- (7) Requires school districts to get written parental permission for student participation in extracurricular activities;
- (8) Codifies procedures for handling the educational needs of children who are placed in residential care facilities by the state but do not require special education services. The substitute specifies how needs will be handled at different types of facilities and requires facilities and districts to cooperate on a general plan;
- (9) Allows school buses to transport students whose ridership does not qualify for state aid and for certain other purposes;
- (10) Establishes a new initial license category for teacher applicants who have completed the American Board of Certification

for Teacher Excellence Program;

(11) Adds participating in strikes to the reasons for which a teacher's contract may be cancelled; and

(12) Requires the reporting and posting of administrator compensation information and certain performance benchmarks such as the Superintendent Targeted Achievement Record (STAR) Program by school districts and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Cost on General Revenue Fund of Unknown but Greater than \$542,350 in FY 2008, Unknown but Greater than \$973,200 in FY 2009, and Unknown but Greater than \$973,200 in FY 2010. Estimated Cost on Other State Funds of Unknown but Greater than \$100,000 in FY 2008, FY 2009, and FY 2010.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that while accreditation organizations exist for child care facilities and some facilities are required to be licensed, the quality rating system developed by the University of Missouri's Center for Family Policy and Research is more rigorous. Facilities do not have to achieve a particular level, but once they are assessed for a rating, they have a clear picture of how to improve their quality level.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Shields; Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral; Meghan Peifer; Citizens for Missouri's Children; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri National Education Association; Todd Belvin, KinderCare; Carrie Shapton, Partnership for America/Mid-America Regional Council; and Terri Foulkes, Center for Family Policy and Research.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it gives the illusion of making better facilities available to low-income parents, when it actually will have the reverse effect. It will cover only a small portion of facilities, and the facilities that get high ratings will be able to charge prices beyond the means of low-income parents.

Testifying against the bill were Johnnie Brown, ABC Child Care; and Karen Werner, Missouri Association of Child Care Providers.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say caution is required in revising emergency license actions to make sure that facilities get due process but do not continue in business when they present a danger to children.

Testifying on the bill was Department of Health and Senior Services.