

HCS HB 1745 -- GIFTED EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Cunningham, 86 (Robb)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 12 to 0.

Currently, school districts are allowed to establish special programs for gifted students. This substitute requires the identification of gifted students and the establishment of programs and services for them. Each school district must annually submit its program and services to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval. Districts will fund their programs and services from their basic state aid or local funding, and the substitute specifies how a district can determine an appropriate amount of funding. School districts must include on their annual school accountability report card information regarding their programs for gifted education. The report must specify whether the school has maintained a state-approved gifted program within the last three years.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2009, FY 2010, and FY 2011.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that 28 states mandate gifted programs. Missouri is one of eight states that do not provide specific funding for gifted programs since the former gifted categorical was included in the base of the new funding formula. Some districts have dropped their gifted programs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Lampe; Sue Winter, Gifted Association of Missouri; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri National Education Association; and Missouri Federation of Teachers and School Related Personnel.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it may create a mandate for the programs without providing additional funding.

Testifying against the bill was Penney Rector, School Administrators Coalition.