

HCS HB 1757 -- TESTING OF GIFTED STUDENTS

SPONSOR: Shields

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 20 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative by a vote of 10 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 1757.

This bill requires school districts beginning in the 2027-28 school year to provide universal screenings for all students at least once before 3rd grade for the purpose of identifying potential gifted students. The bill outlines the screening requirements that provide a body of current, valid, and reliable evidence gathered from a minimum of two areas outlined in the bill. The screening must be reviewed by at least three staff members trained in testing, administration, or gifted education. A child not meeting the criteria on a single screening does not prevent the child from being identified as gifted.

The bill requires districts to establish a process for the universal screenings, annual notification to parents, and the identification of students for gifted programs using criteria recommended by the Advisory Council on the Education of Gifted and Talented Children and the State Board of Education.

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that recent legislation was passed that requires schools to provide a gifted program if a certain percentage of students are determined to be gifted. That legislation did not address the actual determination process or require that school districts screen for gifted students. This bill will ensure that more gifted students are identified. Currently, there may be over 20,000 gifted students that are not being served in schools in Missouri and those students suffer from not having resources provided to them. Often, gifted students are misdiagnosed and end up creating problems in a classroom. Schools that have a universal screening in place are more adept at the identification of gifted pupils, and the number of students in their gifted programs is a better reflection of the gifted population for the school. Universal screening should

be comprehensive but not eliminative, having a variety of guidelines and methods that a student can be screened provides a larger net. Having well developed criteria and guidelines for the screening, testings, identification, and teaching of gifted students is essential.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Shields; Missouri National Education Association; Beth Winton; and Gifted Association of Missouri.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.