

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## HB 1810

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As Reported By Senate Committee On:  
Education, April 4, 1997

**Title:** An act relating to education centers.

**Brief Description:** Revising provision for funding additional education centers.

**Sponsors:** Representatives D. Sommers, Carlson, Radcliff, H. Sommers, Talcott, Ogden, Mielke and Pennington.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Education: 3/21/97, 4/4/97 [DPA].

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

**Majority Report:** Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Hochstatter, Chair; Finkbeiner, Vice Chair; Goings, Johnson, McAuliffe, Rasmussen and Zarelli.

**Staff:** Karen Carter (786-7424)

**Background:** Education centers are privately operated programs for students who have dropped out of school, or who are recommended to the center by the public schools because they are at risk of dropping out. State aid for education centers is based upon their previous level of service, the number of dropout students in the area, the number of dropout students being served in the area, and the education center's standing on a performance index.

In selecting areas for new or expanded education center programs, the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) must consider:

- the proportion and total number of dropouts unserved by existing education centers, if any;
- the availability within the geographic area of programs other than education centers which address the basic education needs of dropouts; and
- waiting lists or other evidence of demand for expanded education center programs.

Current law requires SPI to place priority on "stable and adequate" funding for current contracts demonstrating "superior" performance in their work with youth dropouts. Specifically, if appropriations do not increase over the previous biennium sufficient to allow additional centers to operate at minimally acceptable levels of service without reducing the funds available to previously funded centers, SPI need not respond to requests for state funds from a new or expanded education center.

**Summary of Amended Bill:** The restriction on SPI actions to fund new or expanded education center programs is modified. SPI must fund additional centers if directed to do so by the Legislature through the budget act, even if the appropriation does not increase.

**Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:** The emergency clause is removed.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Available

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

**Testimony For:** Education centers cannot afford to suffer any further cuts to expand services to additional public school students. SPI is unlikely to fund additional placements without increased appropriations, but would need specific direction to do so by the Legislature in light of enabling statutes for education centers.

**Testimony Against:** None.

**Testified:** Representative D. Sommers, sponsor (pro)