

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2542

As Reported By House Committee On:

Education

Title: An act relating to alternative educational service providers.

Brief Description: Limiting administrative fees that school districts charge alternative educational service providers.

Revised for 1st Substitute: Requiring alternative education providers operating under contracts with school districts to receive a minimum amount of state general fund moneys generated per student.

Sponsors: Representatives Keiser, Talcott, Santos, Radcliff and Rockefeller.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 1/24/00, 2/2/00 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- School districts that choose to contract with alternative educational service providers for the education of eligible students will give the providers at least 85 percent of the basic education monies the districts receive from the state for those students.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 14 members: Representatives Quall, Democratic Co-Chair; Talcott, Republican Co-Chair; Haigh, Democratic Vice Chair; Schindler, Republican Vice Chair; Carlson; Cox; Keiser; Rockefeller; Santos; D. Schmidt; Schual-Berke; Stensen; Thomas and Wensman.

Staff: Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

Background:

School districts may contract with alternative educational service providers for the education of eligible students. Eligible students include students who are likely to be expelled, have been suspended, present chronic disciplinary problems, or are academically at risk. School districts may require students who would otherwise be suspended or expelled to attend a program offered by an alternative educational service provider. A decision to place a student in a program operated by a provider must be jointly determined by the district, the student's parent or guardian, and the provider. The district and provider must agree on the specific learning outcomes to be pursued.

Alternative educational service providers may include other schools, education centers, skills centers, dropout prevention programs, and alternative education programs not operated by the school district. Providers may also include other public and private organizations, with the exception of religious or sectarian organizations.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A funding requirement is adopted for school districts that choose to contract with alternative educational service providers. The districts will provide to the contractors at least 85 percent of state basic education monies generated by each student included in the contracts.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill: The funding requirement is reworded from a limit of 15 percent on administrative fees to an 85 percent formula per student.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Alternative educational service providers serve some of the state's most difficult and at risk students. Many of the students they serve are trying to gain the knowledge and skills they need to reenter high school. Some are excluded from public schools due to disciplinary issues. School districts sometimes retain up to 30 percent of the money the state provides for the students, even though the students are being educated by these private clinics and programs. Education clinics cannot provide the services these students need without sufficient funds.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Representative Karen Keiser, prime sponsor; and Steve Daschle, Southwest Youth and Family Services.