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## Education Committee

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# HB 2245

**Brief Description:** Creating a task force to study the basic design of middle schools and high schools.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Quall, Tom, Ormsby, Hunt, Ericks, Haigh and McDermott.

Brief Summary of Bill
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creates a task force to study the design of middle school and high school and to report back with a plan for their redesign.</li></ul>



**Hearing Date:** 3/1/05

**Staff:** Susan Morrissey (786-7111).

**Background:**

On studies of student achievement, elementary school students tend to attain higher achievement levels on the state's standards than is true of students in middle schools and high schools. The achievement gap is even higher between American youth and their high school peers in other industrialized countries of the world, a gap that is especially acute in mathematics and science.

The international and state high school achievement gaps may not measure the educational attainment of students who have already dropped out of school. About 66 percent of the state's youth graduate with their peers. That percentage is even lower for students in some demographic categories. About 42 percent of American Indian youth graduate on time. The on-time graduation rate for African American, Hispanic, and limited English proficient youth is under 50 percent. Most youth who don't graduate on time never complete high school. However, a small percentage of them get GED's, or obtain diplomas after either a fifth year in high school or through community or technical college high school completion programs.

**Summary of Bill:**

A task force is created to examine the design of middle schools and high schools. The task force is composed of eight legislators, two school district superintendents, two principals, two school directors, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and one representative each of the Governor and the Gates Foundation. Members of the legislature will be selected from each major caucus by the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President of the Senate. Task force members representing principals, superintendents, and school directors will be selected by their respective organizations. Legislative committee staff will provide support to the task force.

The task force will:

- Examine the rate of academic improvement in middle and high schools;
- Review state and national literature on secondary school redesign;
- Identify successful models for the organization of middle and high schools; and
- Report, by December 15, 2005, with a plan for the structural change and improvement of middle schools and high schools. The plan will include a description of the roles and responsibilities of various groups for the implementation of the plan.

Successful organizational models include those which:

- Reduce dropout rates;
- Close achievement gaps;
- Accelerate academic improvement;
- Improve teaching and learning in mathematics; and
- Provide challenging opportunities for students who meet standards early and more flexible options after a student's sophomore year in high school.

Legislators on the task force will receive per diem and travel. The agency or organization that appoints the other members will be responsible for any per diem and travel of its members.

The task force expires June 30, 2006.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.