

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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**Subject:** Establishing a three-year special education pilot project

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### Overview

Establishes a three-year pilot project for the Rochester school district and up to three other school districts or cooperative units to examine the educational and financial impact of exempting the participating school districts from four state special education requirements that exceed federal law.

#### Section

**1 Impact of waiving specific special education requirements that exceed federal law; three-year pilot project.**

**Subd. 1. Establishment; goal.** Establishes a three-year pilot project for the Rochester school district and up to three other school districts or cooperative units selected by the commissioner of children, families and learning to determine what impact waiving specific state special education requirements has on the quality and cost effectiveness of the instructional services provided to and the educational outcomes of eligible students in the participating districts.

**Subd. 2. Eligibility; applications.** Directs the commissioner to transmit information about the pilot project and make application forms available to interested districts. Requires applicants to submit an application by July 1, 2003, identifying the special education requirements listed in subdivision 3 from which the applicant seeks a waiver and indicating how the applicant proposes to modify the activities and procedures affected by the waiver. Requires the commissioner to approve the applications by August 1, 2003.

## **Section**

**Subd. 3. Waivers.** Waives four state special education requirements for the 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006 school years for the participating districts: pre-referral interventions, transitional services for students reaching age 14 or the ninth grade, community transition interagency committees, and coordinated interagency services affecting eligible students with disabilities who are age seven or older.

**Subd. 4. Students' rights.** States that eligible students with disabilities enrolled in a participating school district remain entitled to federal and state procedural protections. Requires project participants to protect students' civil rights, provide equal educational opportunities, and prohibit discrimination. Makes ineligible to continue participating any district participant that fails to comply with this subdivision.

**Subd. 5. Technical assistance.** Directs the commissioner to assist project participants at their request in developing an evaluation process.

**Subd. 6. Evaluation; report.** Requires participating districts to evaluate the impact of waiving the state special education requirements listed in subdivision 3 on the quality and cost effectiveness of the instructional services provided to and educational outcomes of eligible students in the participating districts. Requires participating districts also to document parents' responses. Directs participating districts to submit a progress report by September 1, 2004 and a final report by November 1, 2005. Directs the commissioner to present the results of the report to the legislature by February 1, 2006 and recommend appropriate statutory changes.

Makes this section effective immediately.