

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 637

DATE: February 7, 2007

Version: As Introduced

Authors: Dittrich and others

Subject: Full-Day Kindergarten Funded on a Sliding Scale Basis

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Overview

Minnesota currently provides funding for half-day kindergarten by counting each kindergarten student as .557 pupil units. Under current law, a school district that operates a full-day kindergarten program funded partially through student fees must run the fee-based portion of the program through its community education fund and is not allowed to provide a fee-based program through its general fund.

HF 637 charges the Commissioner of Education with the task of creating a sliding scale fee schedule for full-day kindergarten programs, authorizes school districts to charge parents a fee for full-day kindergarten based on that fee schedule, and creates a sliding scale state aid that is paid to school districts for full-day kindergarten for children from low income families.

Section

- 1 General Policy.** Amends the statutory general policy that prohibits a school district from charging a fee for an academic program to allow a school district to charge a fee for full-day kindergarten.
- 2 School boards may require fees.** Includes a fee for a full-day kindergarten program as an eligible fee.
- 3 Board shall not charge certain fees.** Exempts fees for full-day kindergarten from the list of prohibited fees.
- 4 Full-day kindergarten.**

Section

Subd. 1. Full-day kindergarten authorized. Authorizes a school district to operate a full-day kindergarten program as part of its general fund. Allows a district to continue to offer half-day kindergarten programs.

Subd. 2. State sliding scale fee. Requires the Commissioner of Education to develop a sliding scale fee for kindergarten pupils based on family size and family income. Authorizes a school district to use the state fee schedule or to establish its own fee schedule.

Subd. 3. Locally determined fee. Allows a school district to establish a different fee schedule than the one determined by the Commissioner of Education.

Subd. 4. Full-day kindergarten funding. Provides additional revenue to each school district equal to the formula allowance for that year times .5 times the kindergarten count less any amounts raised by fees paid by the parents.

Subd. 5. Fee waiver; inability to pay. Allows a school board to waive the fees for any student at its discretion. Prohibits a school district from denying a student access to a full-day kindergarten program for nonpayment of the fee.

5 Appropriation. Appropriates an unspecified amount of money in FY 2008 and FY 2009 for full-day kindergarten aid.