

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Subject: Alternative school calendar pilot program

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Overview

Appropriates \$2,000,000 from the general fund to the education commissioner in fiscal year 2009 to establish the six-year alternative school calendar pilot program to examine the impact of school calendar arrangements on student learning.

Section

1 Alternative school calendar pilot program.

Subd. 1. Establishment. Establishes a six-year alternative school calendar pilot program to examine the impact of school calendar arrangements on student learning, notwithstanding laws governing school districts' calendars, and consistent with the state's learning year program. Directs the education commissioner to structure the program and select program participants to compare the impact of traditional and nontraditional school calendars on: students' retention of educational material after vacations; the enrichment opportunities and remedial help available to students during the school year; student attendance, discipline, and achievement; and time available to students and staff for out-of-school learning, vacations, and recreation.

Subd. 2. Eligibility; application. Directs interested school districts and charter schools to apply to the commissioner and to identify the internal and external factors that may affect a preference for a traditional or nontraditional school calendar. Allows the commissioner to request added information.

Subd. 3. Application review; grant awards. Declares eligible for a grant only those

Section

school districts and charter schools that meet the requirements of subdivisions 1 and 2. Directs the commissioner to award grants on an equitable geographic basis if possible. Directs the commissioner to base the amount of the grant award on the number of enrolled students and the length of the grantee's school calendar. Requires grant expenditures to be consistent with the budget information the grantee periodically submits to the commissioner.

Subd. 4. Evaluation. Directs the commissioner to provide for an evaluation of the impact of the school calendar arrangements on student learning and to recommend to the legislature by February 1, 2015, a preferred school calendar based upon demonstrated student achievement and other listed criteria.

Makes this section effective immediately and applicable to the 2008-2009 through the 2013-2014 school years and requires the education commissioner to report to the legislature by February 15, 2015.

2 Appropriation. Appropriates \$2,000,000 from the general fund to the education commissioner in fiscal year 2009 to establish the six-year alternative school calendar pilot program.

Makes this section effective July 1, 2008.