

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Proposes to establish for the 2012-2013 school year an A to F school and district grading system that is modeled on Florida's school grading system and based on students' annual test scores in reading and math. Proposes to establish a school recognition funding program that rewards schools for good grades. Directs the education commissioner to convene a stakeholder group to develop a plan for implementing the school and district grading system and to submit a written plan to the legislature. Directs the education commissioner to recommend to the legislature fiscal mandates that could be waived for schools that receive good grades.

1 School and district grading system and school recognition program.

Subd. 1. School and district grades. (a) Consistent with state growth targets and school performance report cards, establishes an "A to F" school and district grading system to identify schools where students are achieving low, medium, or high growth and achieving or not achieving proficiency on statewide reading and math tests. Directs the commissioner annually to grade schools and districts and report the grades based on specified calculations: (1) bases 50 percent of a school's grade on the numbers and percentages of students in applicable student subcategories under federal law who achieved proficiency on statewide reading and math assessments in the previous school year; (2) bases 25 percent of a school's grade on the numbers and percentages of students in applicable student subcategories under federal law who achieved low, medium, or high growth on statewide reading and math assessments in the previous school year; (3) bases 15 percent of a school's grade on the numbers and percentages of students in applicable student subcategories under federal law who achieved low growth and did not achieve proficiency on the statewide reading assessments in the previous school year; (4) bases ten percent of a school's grade on the numbers and percentages of students in applicable student subcategories under federal law who achieved low growth and did not achieve proficiency on the statewide math assessments in the previous school year; and (5) using the calculations in clauses (1) to (4), bases a school district's grade on the combined average schools of all district schools.

(b) Requires that school and district grades accurately reflect the differences in schools' performance based on students' proficiency and growth and the calculations required under

this subdivision. Allows a school or district to appeal its grade in writing to the commissioner within 30 days of receiving notice of its grade and makes the commissioner's decision final. Categorizes grades given under this section as nonpublic data until not later than ten days after an appeal is completed under this paragraph.

Subd. 2. School recognition. (a) Makes a school that receives an "A" grade in the previous school year, improves at least one letter grade in the previous school year, or improves more letter grades in the two previous school years eligible for a school recognition award.

(b) Declares that a school recognition award equals \$100 per enrollee in each eligible school. Directs the commissioner to distribute the awards.

(c) Allows a school to use a school recognition award to pay one-time staff bonuses, pay one-time expenditures for equipment or materials to help maintain or improve student academic achievement, temporarily employ licensed or otherwise qualified staff to help maintain or improve student academic achievement. Declares that awards are not subject to collective bargaining agreements.

(d) Allows a school to select a site team to decide how to distribute the award and if no site team is selected or no site team agreement is reached by November 1 in the year the award is made, directs the school principal or other person having administrative control of the school to distribute the award.

Makes this section effective immediately and requires the commissioner to use student performance data beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, and determine and report a letter grade for each school and district, and distribute school recognition awards beginning in the 2012-2013 school year and later.

- 2** **General education revenue.** Adds the school recognition award to the list of revenue items that comprise general education revenue for school districts.

Makes this section effective for revenue for fiscal year 2013 and later.

- 3** **Report; plan for implementing school and district grading system.** Directs the education commissioner to convene a stakeholder group to advise the commissioner on developing a plan to implement the school and district grading system. Directs the commissioner to present the written plan to the legislature by February 15, 2012, and include any recommendations for further clarifying the school and district grading system.

Makes this section effective immediately.

- 4** **Report; recommendations for increasing schools' financial flexibility.** Directs the education commissioner, by February 1, 2012, to recommend to the legislature fiscal mandates that could be waived to give greater financial flexibility to schools receiving an "A" grade, schools that improved at least one letter grade in the school year, and schools improving two or more letter grades in two school years.