

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Proposes to establish a five-year pilot project to allow the Lakes International Language Academy charter school to become a school within the Forest Lake school district.

1 Allowing a charter school to become a school within a school district while retaining its autonomy and flexibility; pilot project.

Subd. 1. Establishment. Notwithstanding law to the contrary, establishes a five-year pilot project to allow the Lakes International Language Academy charter school (LILA) to become a school within the Forest Lake school district so that LILA operates under the direct authority and supervision of the Forest Lake superintendent and the LILA chief administrator reports directly to the superintendent.

Subd. 2. Implementation. (a) Suspends the statutory requirements governing LILA and Volunteers of America of Minnesota, LILA's authorizer, throughout the term of the pilot project, to the extent the requirements conflict with this section.

(b) Makes the following conditions apply during the term of the pilot project: LILA remains in its current facility and continues to operate in the same way as before the start of the pilot project except as otherwise provided in this section; the pilot project is subject to a written contract between LILA and the Forest Lake school district signed by both parties before June 30, 2012, that stipulates that (i) LILA is a school within the district, (ii) LILA remains exempt from statutes and rules not applicable to charter schools and other provisions the parties agree to, and (iii) a monitoring committee composed of representatives of LILA, the school district, LILA's authorizer, and other individuals that meets at least annually to assess the progress and status of the pilot project; LILA budget and expenditures are reflected in an annual agreement between LILA and the school district; the LILA board of directors serves as a site council and retains an advisory role in the school's operations; no increase in school employees occurs; charter school employees are at-will employees of the school district; and the charter school employees remain eligible to participate in Q-Comp under LILA's approved Q-Comp agreement.

(c) Allows Forest lake to include LILA pupils in its pupil count and has LILA pupils qualify for funding as pupils served by Forest Lake except that charter school building lease aid continues.

Subd. 3. Termination. Allows both LILA and Forest Lake to withdraw from participating by March 1 in any school year and requires the withdrawing party to immediately notify the other party, the education commissioner, and LILA's authorizer. Causes the pilot project to terminate the proximate June 30 after a party withdraws and the parties to revert to their pre-pilot project status, including reinstating LILA's authorizer for the next two consecutive school years. Requires the education commissioner to serve as LILA's authorizer for one school year if LILA's authorizer terminates or does not renew LILA's charter school contract or no longer serves as an authorizer and to assist LILA in transferring to a different eligible authorizer unless the charter school contract is terminated or not renewed for cause.

Subd. 4. Evaluation. Directs the education commissioner, in consultation with the school district, LILA, LILA's authorizer, and representatives of administrators and teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot project in improving student outcomes and report to the legislature by February 1 in the last year the pilot project is in effect.

Makes this section effective immediately unless LILA and Forest Lake fail to sign the requires contract before June 30, 2012, which makes this section ineffective on that date.