

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

Proposes a three-year vision therapy pilot project grant to determine the effect that comprehensive eye exams and vision therapy have on students' need for continuing with an individualized education program.

Section

1 Vision therapy pilot project.

Subd. 1. Establishment. Establishes a three-year competitive pilot project grant for school districts, charter school, and tribal schools.

Subd. 2. Pilot project. (a) Requires all 2nd and 3rd graders and all 4th graders and 5th graders with an individualized education program to have a comprehensive eye exam in the first year of the project grant. Requires all 2nd graders and all 4th grade transfer students with an individualized education program to have a comprehensive eye exam in the second and third years of the project grant. Requires all 2nd through 5th graders who have not had a comprehensive eye exam through the project grant and are put on an individualized education program to have a comprehensive eye exam. Requires exam results to be shared with a student's individualized education program team to determine whether vision therapy is appropriate. Allows a parent to have a student opt out of the exam.

(b) Directs project participants to provide appropriate vision therapy to students needing such therapy.

Subd. 3. Application. Directs an applicant to submit a plan to the commissioner

Section

that identifies the schools implementing the pilot, how the vision therapy will be provided, how students' skills will be evaluated before and after vision therapy, how students will be monitored after receiving vision therapy, and what additional reading interventions will be available to students who complete the therapy.

Subd. 4. Application review; grant awards. (a) Requires payment of grant awards in the 2014-2015 through 2016-2017 school years. Allows preference to be given to applicants with high percentages of students with individualized education programs.

(b) Awards grants for a three-year period. Allows the commissioner to award multiple grants. Allows the grant amount to vary based on the application.

(c) Directs the commissioner to determine the grant amount based on the number of students participating.

Subd. 5. Evaluation. Directs the commissioner to evaluate the pilot and report to the legislature by January 15, 2018, on how many students with an individualized education program who received a comprehensive eye exam and vision therapy no longer require an individualized education program.

2 Appropriation. Appropriates an unspecified sum from the general fund to the commissioner of education in fiscal year 2014 for vision therapy pilot project grants.