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Section

Article 1: General Education

Overview

Increases safe schools revenue for school districts and converts the levy program to an aid and levy program. Provides safe schools revenue to charter schools. Separates school district local optional revenue and board-approved referendum revenue from voter-approved operating referendum revenue.

- 1 **Local optional revenue.** Separates school district local optional revenue and board-approved referendum revenue from voter-approved operating referendum revenue. Equalizes the first \$300 per pupil of local optional revenue at \$880,000 per pupil. Equalizes the remaining \$424 per pupil of local optional revenue at \$510,000 per pupil.
- 2 **Operating capital levy.** Increases the operating capital levy equalizing factor to lower the operating capital levy for fiscal year 2020 and later.
- 3 **Equity revenue.** Adjusts the equity revenue component to correspond to redefined local optional revenue. Removes the requirement that a district have at least some amount of voter-approved referendum revenue before qualifying for the full amount of equity revenue.
- 4 **Referendum allowance.** Eliminates the connection between local optional revenue, board-approved referendum authority and the voter-approved referendum allowance. Sets the operating referendum amount approved by voters as the district's referendum allowance.

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- 5 Referendum allowance limit.** Adjusts the operating referendum cap to match the voter-approved amounts of referendum revenue. Sets the referendum cap at \$1,712.53 for fiscal year 2020. Continues to increase the cap in each subsequent year by the statutorily established inflationary amount.
- 6 Referendum equalization revenue.** Reconfigures the operating referendum equalization tiers to reflect the “roll-out” of local optional revenue. Sets the first tier of referendum equalization revenue at \$460 per pupil and sets the second tier as the per pupil amount of operating referendum revenue in excess of \$460.
- 7 Referendum equalization levy.** Sets the equalization levy for the first tier of referendum revenue at \$510,000 per pupil unit. Sets the second tier equalizing factor at \$290,000 per pupil unit.
- 8 Referendum equalization aid.** Resets referendum equalization aid to match the difference between the new referendum revenue and the new referendum levy amounts.
- 9 Referendum tax base replacement aid.** Subtracts tax base replacement aid from local optional revenue as well as referendum revenue.
- 10 Safe schools revenue.** Increases safe schools revenue and provides additional safe schools revenue entirely in state aid for fiscal year 2019 equal to \$18 per pupil unit for school districts and charter schools and provides \$7.50 per pupil unit in additional aid to school districts that are members of intermediate school districts or other cooperative units. Adds a minimum revenue guarantee of \$22,500 per school district.
- Establishes an equalized aid and levy beginning in fiscal year 2020. Sets the total safe schools revenue equal to \$72 per pupil unit for school districts, with a minimum of \$30,000 for small school districts, \$36 per pupil unit for charter schools, \$30 per pupil unit for members of intermediate school districts, and \$15 per pupil unit for members of other cooperative units. Equalizes safe school revenue with an equalizing factor of 60 percent of the statewide average tax base per pupil unit (about \$4,800 currently).
- Beginning July 1, 2018, authorizes schools to transfer safe schools money from the general fund to the debt redemption fund to pay for the share of any bonds that were used to pay for facility security enhancements.
- 11 General education appropriation.** Increases the general education appropriation. See fiscal tracking sheet for details.
- 12 Appropriation; safe schools revenue.** Appropriates \$19.8 million from the general fund to the commissioner of education for payment of safe schools aid in fiscal year 2019.
- 13 Repealer.** Repeals the following:
- ▶ section 126C.17, subdivision 9a – board approved referendum revenue of up to \$300 per pupil unit (this authority is combined into local optional revenue).

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Article 2: Education Excellence

Overview

Makes the increase in state-paid tribal contract school aid permanent. Modifies the American Indian teacher grant program. Increases QComp aid to fully fund existing program participants.

- 1 **Statewide testing.** Removes the requirement for the commissioner to establish empirically derived benchmarks on adaptive assessments for students in grades 3 to 8.
- 2 **Statewide and local assessments; results.** Removes the requirement for the commissioner to establish computer adaptive assessments for students in grades 3 to 8.
- 3 **Basic alternative teacher compensation aid.** Adjusts the basic alternative teacher compensation aid amount to fully fund participants in the program prior to January 1, 2018.
- 4 **Establishment; American Indian grants.** Authorizes American Indian teacher grant recipients to enter into contracts with tribal colleges, technical colleges, community colleges, and four-year secondary institutions to identify and provide grants to American Indian students interested in becoming educators.
- 5 **Grant amount; American Indian program.** Requires American Indian educator grants to be used for student grants, but not student loans.
- 6 **Information to student applicants.** Eliminates the student loan option as part of the American Indian educator grant program.
- 7 **Eligibility for student grants.** Prioritizes eligibility for student grants first to students who are enrolled in a tribe, then to first- and second-generation descendants, and then to other students having origins in any of the original peoples of North America who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.
- 8 **Eligible programming.** Adds a list of eligible programs to the American Indian Educator Grant program, including: (1) any educational certification necessary for employment; (2) Early Childhood and Family Education (ECFE) or prekindergarten licensure; (3) elementary or secondary education; (4) school administration; or (5) any educational program serving American Indian students.

Requires at least 80 percent of the state funding to be used for grants to students.
- 9 **Revenue amount.** Makes the four-year temporary increase from \$1,500 to \$3,200 per pupil in the state aid payment to tribal contract schools permanent (Minnesota's four Bureau of Indian Education schools commonly referred to as tribal contract schools).
- 10 **Appropriation; college entrance examination reimbursement.** Authorizes any fiscal year 2018 unspent appropriation in the college entrance examination reimbursement payments to carry forward into fiscal year 2019. Authorizes any balance in fiscal year 2019 to carry forward for an additional four months.

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- 11 Appropriation; alternative teacher compensation aid.** Increases the appropriation for alternative teacher contract aid (QComp) by \$1,013,000 to fully pay for program participants as of January 1, 2018.
- 12 Repealer.** Repeals the following:
- ▶ Section 122A.63, subdivisions 7 and 8 – American Indian teacher preparation loan forgiveness and revolving fund amounts (section 6 makes the program entirely a grant program).

Article 3: Special Education

Overview

Increases special education aid for school districts and simplifies special education aid formulas.

- 1 Definitions; special education aid.** Increases the per pupil cap on special education revenue by increasing the cap from \$180 to \$210 per pupil unit for fiscal year 2019, and continues the annual increase for subsequent years at \$40 per pupil. Eliminates obsolete language.
- 2 Special education initial aid.** Eliminates the need to calculate old formula special education expenditures. Rebases the disability-by-category initial aid amounts to match current expenditures as follows:
- ▶ from \$10,400 to \$13,300 for students in the disability areas of autism, developmental delay, and severely multiply impaired;
 - ▶ from \$18,000 to \$19,200 for students in the disability areas of deaf and hard-of-hearing, and emotional or behavioral disorders;
 - ▶ from \$27,000 to \$25,200 for students in the disability areas of developmentally cognitive mild moderate, developmentally cognitive severe-profound, physically impaired, and deafblind.
- 3 Special education excess cost aid.** Increases special education excess cost aid by lowering the reduction for general education revenue from 2.5 to 2.3 percent of the general education revenue.
- 4 Appropriation; special education aid.** Increases the special education aid appropriation for fiscal year 2019. See fiscal tracking sheet for details.

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Article 4: Facilities and Technology

Overview

Allows certain cooperating school districts to allocate long term facilities maintenance revenue among member school districts. Expands the uses of the proceeds of bonds issued by school districts for the purchase of equipment that are backed by transfers of operating capital revenue to include emergency communications equipment and other equipment related to violence prevention and facility security.

- 1 **Allocation from districts participating in agreements for secondary education and interdistrict cooperation.** Allows school districts that participate in cooperative instructional programs to allocate long term facilities maintenance revenue for the shared facilities among member school districts.
- 2 **Purchase of certain equipment.** School districts may issue bonds backed by operating capital revenue for certain equipment purchases. Expands the allowable equipment purchases to include communications systems and other equipment designed to increase student and staff security.

Article 5: Libraries

Overview

Transfers any unspent regional library telecommunications aid to school districts and charter schools for school telecommunications access needs.

- 1 **Award of funds; regional library telecommunications access aid.** Redirects unspent regional library telecommunications aid to school district and charter school telecommunications access aid for those schools that employ a licensed media specialist or a licensed librarian.

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Article 6: Early Childhood and Family Support

Overview

Makes the school readiness plus program permanent. Increases funding for voluntary prekindergarten and school readiness plus programs beginning in fiscal year 2020. Statutorily establishes and funds the Help Me Grow program. Modifies certain background checks for early educators.

- 1 **Voluntary prekindergarten; program requirements.** Clarifies that the cognitive and social skills formative measure administered to prekindergarten pupils must be age-appropriate.
- 2 **Application process; priority for high poverty schools.** Splits the Minneapolis and St. Paul school districts into two separate regions for purposes of allocating voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) funds. This change does not affect the size of the allocations for the other regions. Adjusts the VPK application process to coordinate the program with the school readiness plus program which is being made permanent. Removes obsolete language.
- 3 **VPK Participation limits.** Increases the funding for participation in the VPK and school readiness plus programs by 5 percentage points per year over the previous year's level beginning in fiscal year 2020. Removes obsolete language.
- 4 **Early learning scholarships; family eligibility.** Expands the general age limit for a child participating in the Early Learning Scholarship program from ages 3 to 5, to any child under the age of 5.
- 5 **Administration; early learning scholarships.** Authorizes early learning scholarships to carry forward from the first to the second year of each biennium. Allows any unused balances in the second year of the biennium to carry forward for another three months.
- 6 **Help Me Grow program.**

Subd. 1. Purpose. Statutorily establishes the Help Me Grow program and states that the program's purpose is to provide a comprehensive information and referral system for families with children under the age of 8.

Subd. 2. Establishment and administration. Requires the commissioner of education to fund and coordinate interagency agreements with the commissioners of health and human services to implement the Help Me Grow program.

Subd. 3. Duties. Requires the Help Me Grow program to facilitate collaboration among health care, early learning, and family support programs. Promotes outreach, detection, and linking of services.

Subd. 4. Review. Requires the commissioners of education, health, and human services to annually review the outcome, alignment, and impact of the Help Me Grow program.

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- 7 Pupil units.** Makes the pupil count for school readiness plus participants permanent (current law limited the program’s funding to fiscal years 2018 and 2019 only).
Eliminates the separate minimum hours of instruction necessary for disabled kindergarten pupils to be counted as full-time pupils (this weighting predated the state funding for full day kindergarten and was set slightly higher than the hours of instruction for other kindergarten pupils).
- 8 Declining enrollment revenue.** Corrects a cross-reference.
- 9 Use of general education revenue for all-day kindergarten and prekindergarten.**
Corrects a cross-reference.
- 10 National criminal history record check.** Defines the term “national criminal history record check” to mean a fingerprint-based check of records conducted by the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) through the databases maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- 11 Background studies conducted by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (MDE).** Requires the commissioner of human services to perform background studies on Head Start programs.
- 12 Background study; tribal organizations.** Authorizes tribal organizations to contract with the commissioner of human services to conduct background studies of individuals affiliated with a child care program sponsored, managed, or licensed by a tribal organization.
- 13 Background study; Head Start programs.** Authorizes Head Start programs to contract with the commissioner of human services for background studies. Exempts a Head Start program that does not contract with the commissioner, is not licensed, and is not registered for funding under chapter 119B from chapter 245C.
- 14 School readiness plus; program requirements.** Clarifies that the cognitive and social skills formative measure administered to school readiness plus prekindergarten pupils must be age-appropriate.
- 15 School readiness plus; application process; priority for high poverty schools.** Eliminates obsolete language and coordinates the application process for school readiness plus with the application process for voluntary prekindergarten programs.
- 16 School readiness plus; no supplanting.** Requires that voluntary prekindergarten and school readiness plus program revenue for sites first qualifying in fiscal year 2018 must be used to supplement, not supplant, existing state, federal, and local revenue for prekindergarten activities.
- 17 Revisor’s instruction.** Directs the revisor of statutes to codify the school readiness plus program in Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.152.
- 18 Repealer.** Repeals the scheduled expiration of the school readiness plus program.

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Article 7: Self Sufficiency and Lifelong Learning

Overview

Appropriates an additional \$403,000 beginning in fiscal year 2019 to pay high school equivalency test fees. Increases the portion of the high school equivalency test fee paid by the state on behalf of an eligible person taking a high school equivalency test from 60 to 100 percent of the cost of the full battery of tests. Raises the maximum amount paid per battery of tests from \$40 to \$120 for each eligible test taker.

- 1 Commissioner-selected high school equivalency test fees.** Increases the portion of the high school equivalency test fee paid by the state on behalf of an eligible person taking a high school equivalency test from 60 to 100 percent of the cost of the full battery of tests. Raises the maximum amount paid per battery of tests from \$40 to \$120 for each eligible test taker.
- 2 Appropriation; high school equivalency tests.** Appropriates an additional \$403,000 in fiscal year 2019 for high school equivalency test fees.

Article 8: State Agencies

Overview

Increases the appropriation for the Minnesota Department of Education.
Redirects a portion of the appropriation for the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

- 1 Appropriations; Department of Education.** Increases the appropriation for MDE by \$2,704,000 for fiscal years 2019. Includes \$1.5 million for the Help Me Grow program. Increases the MDE base budget by \$1.704 million per year.
- 3 Appropriation; Perpich Center for Arts Education.** Reduces the portion of money set aside for potential severance payments for employees of the Crosswinds school from \$1.2 million to \$600,000. Shifts \$600,000 of the Perpich Center's budget from fiscal year 2018 to 2019 and requires that money to be used for computer and technology enhancements.