

Subject Special Education Funding for High Cost Students

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Overview

Local school districts are required by state law to provide appropriate and necessary special education to children with disabilities from birth to 21 years of age. Special instruction and services for children with disabilities must be based on the assessment and individualized education program (IEP).

In Minnesota, special education services are provided in one of 14 areas defined in state rule. Service levels depend on each student's IEP. Some students may receive only an hour of services a week while others may be in a program that provides special instruction for the full school day. The special education costs for some students who need limited services are not large. For other students, particularly for those students who have severe disabilities, are medically fragile, or may otherwise need the presence of a full-time aide during the school day, the special education spending for that student can be quite large.

School districts, charter schools, and cooperative units receive state aid to provide special education services to their students. State and federal special education aid cover roughly 60 percent of the full costs of special education services.

House File 3963 proposes a new aid category of special education aid, called "high cost services aid" to provide additional special education aid for those school districts that serve students whose total special education costs are more than three times the statewide average special education costs per student.

Summary

Section	Description
1	<p>Definitions. (Special education)</p> <p>Defines “high-cost services” as the expenditures attributable to a special education student whose costs of service are more than three times the state average cost of services per pupil.</p>
2	<p>High-cost services reimbursement.</p> <p>Authorizes a school district or cooperative unit (like an intermediate school district) to calculate the nonfederal special education expenditures for its students being served in a federal instructional setting 3 or 4 program. Requires the Department of Education to calculate the difference between the total cost for each qualifying student and the state and federal aid provided for that student.</p> <p>Creates an aid payment amount equal to 90 percent of the difference between the total cost for each high cost student and the aid attributable to that student. Deducts the high-cost service special education aid amount from the special education tuition bills sent to resident school districts.</p>
3	<p>Special education aid; out-of-state tuition and high-cost services.</p> <p>Adds the amounts necessary for the high-cost student reimbursement aid to the appropriation for special education aid for out-of-state tuition. Appropriates an unspecified amount of money to pay school districts for these costs.</p>



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