

HCS HB 637 -- GIFTED EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Pfautsch

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues in Education by a vote of 11 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on Education by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill modifies provisions relating to gifted education.

The bill prohibits school districts from determining whether a child is gifted based on the child's participation in an advanced placement course or international baccalaureate course. Whether a child is gifted must be determined using the statutory definition of "gifted children" (Section 162.720, RSMo).

Beginning in the 2016-2017 school year, a school district will incur a reduction in funding if it experiences a decrease in its gifted program enrollment of more than 20%. If a school district experiences a decrease of 20% or more in its gifted program enrollment, an amount equal to the product of the difference between the number of students enrolled in the gifted program in the current school year and the number of students enrolled in the previous school year multiplied by \$680 must be subtracted from the school district's current year payment amount (Section 163.031).

The bill repeals a similar obsolete reduction in funding for districts with reductions in gifted program enrollment. This reduction in funding provision expired at the end of the 2011-2012 school year (Section 163.031).

The reduction in funding provision and repeal of the obsolete reduction in funding provision will become effective on July 1, 2016.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that school districts should be encouraged to maintain and strengthen their gifted education programs and this bill will ensure that money earmarked for gifted education will be used for those programs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Pfautsch; Dr. Robin Lady; James Atkins; Parker Atkins; Carl Peterson; Daniel Hilty; Kristen Hilty; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri State Teachers Association; and AFT St. Louis Local 420.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.