

FEB 28 1997
EDUCATION

HOUSE FILE 404
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and O'BRIEN

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the establishment of a class size reduction
2 program, increasing the physical plant and equipment levy
3 limits for eligible school districts, and making an
4 appropriation.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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HF 404

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 279.59 CLASS SIZE REDUCTION
2 PROGRAM.

3 1. There is established a class size reduction program to
4 provide additional funds for school districts that develop a
5 class size reduction plan. To be eligible for a class size
6 reduction payment as provided in this section, a school
7 district shall submit annually by April 15 to the department
8 of education a plan which includes, at a minimum, the goals of
9 reducing class size in grades one through three and
10 instituting professional development to assist teachers in
11 teaching challenging curricula more effectively, the methods
12 by which the district shall achieve those goals, and a process
13 for engaging parents, teachers, school administrators, and
14 students in the shared goal of raising student achievement
15 levels. In addition, the plan shall provide for methods for
16 measuring student achievement and progress.

17 2. a. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
18 state to the department of education for the fiscal year
19 beginning July 1, 1997, and ending June 30, 1998, the sum of
20 seven million five hundred thousand dollars to be used to fund
21 school districts that meet the requirements of subsection 1
22 and which limit the district's self-contained grade one
23 classroom sizes to an average student-to-teacher ratio of not
24 more than twenty students to one teacher, or the equivalent,
25 in a school that utilizes team teaching methods.

26 b. There is appropriated from the general fund of the
27 state to the department of education for the fiscal year
28 beginning July 1, 1998, and ending June 30, 1999, the sum of
29 fifteen million dollars to be used to fund school districts
30 that meet the requirements of subsection 1 and which limit the
31 self-contained grade one and grade two classroom sizes to an
32 average student-to-teacher ratio of not more than twenty
33 students to one teacher, or the equivalent, in a school that
34 utilizes team teaching methods.

35 c. There is appropriated from the general fund of the

1 state to the department of education for the fiscal year
2 beginning July 1, 1999, and ending June 30, 2000, and for
3 succeeding years, the sum of twenty-two million five hundred
4 thousand dollars to be used to fund school districts that meet
5 the requirements of subsection 1 and which limit the self-
6 contained classroom sizes in grades one through three to an
7 average student-to-teacher ratio of not more than twenty
8 students to one teacher, or the equivalent, in a school that
9 utilizes team teaching methods.

10 3. From the moneys appropriated in subsection 2 for each
11 fiscal year in which moneys are appropriated, the amount of
12 moneys allocated to school districts shall be in the
13 proportion that the basic enrollment for the budget year of
14 the grade level in the district for which the moneys are
15 appropriated bears to the sum of the basic enrollments for the
16 budget year of the grade level of all school districts in the
17 state qualifying for moneys under subsection 1 for the budget
18 year, as basic enrollment and budget year are defined in
19 chapter 257.

20 4. For each year in which an appropriation is made to the
21 class size reduction program, the department of education
22 shall notify the department of revenue and finance of the
23 amount to be paid to each school district based upon the
24 distribution plan set forth for the appropriation made
25 pursuant to this section. The allocation to each school
26 district under this section shall be made in one payment on or
27 about October 1 of the fiscal year for which the appropriation
28 is made, taking into consideration the relative budget and
29 cash position of the state resources. Prior to the receipt of
30 funds, school districts shall submit to the department of
31 education the plan developed in accordance with subsection 1
32 and that funds received under this section shall be used in
33 accordance with the required class size reduction plan.

34 5. Moneys received under this section shall not be
35 commingled with state aid payments made to a school district

1 under section 257.16 and shall be accounted for by the local
2 school district separately from state aid payments.

3 6. Payments made to school districts under this section
4 are miscellaneous income for purposes of chapter 257 or are
5 considered encumbered. Each local school district shall
6 maintain a separate listing for payments received and
7 expenditures made pursuant to this section.

8 Sec. 2. Section 298.2, Code 1997, is amended by adding the
9 following new subsection:

10 NEW SUBSECTION. 6. Notwithstanding subsection 1, the
11 regular physical plant and equipment levy may exceed the
12 thirty-three cent limit provided for in subsection 1 by
13 twenty-five cents per thousand dollars of assessed valuation
14 in a school district if the levy is established by the board
15 of a school district that has developed a class size reduction
16 plan pursuant to section 279.59. The revenue from the levy
17 above the thirty-three cent limit provided for in subsection 1
18 shall be used for purposes of facilities-related costs
19 associated with reducing class size in grades one through
20 three.

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EXPLANATION

22 This bill establishes a class size reduction program to
23 provide additional funds for school districts that submit an
24 annual plan to the department of education that includes, at a
25 minimum, the goals of reducing class size in grades one
26 through three and instituting professional development to
27 assist teachers in teaching challenging curricula more
28 effectively, the methods by which the district shall achieve
29 those goals, and a process for engaging parents, teachers,
30 school administrators, and students in the shared goal of
31 raising student achievement levels. In addition, the plan
32 shall provide for methods for measuring student achievement
33 and progress.

34 The bill appropriates \$7.5 million for grade one in the
35 fiscal year beginning July 1, 1997. The bill adds grade two

1 and another \$7.5 million in the fiscal year beginning July 1,
2 1998, and adds grade three and arrives at a total of \$22.5
3 million for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1999, and for
4 all succeeding years. The moneys allocated shall be
5 distributed in the proportion that the basic enrollment of the
6 grade level in the district for which the moneys are
7 appropriated bears to the sum of the basic enrollments of all
8 school districts in the state for that grade level qualifying
9 for moneys for the budget year.

10 Prior to receiving the funds, school districts shall submit
11 to the department of education the required class size
12 reduction plan.

13 Payments made to school districts under this section are
14 miscellaneous income for purposes of Code chapter 257 or are
15 considered encumbered.

16 The bill permits the regular physical plant and equipment
17 levy to exceed the current limit of 0.33 cents by 0.25 cents
18 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation in the district for school
19 districts that have developed class size reduction plans
20 pursuant to Code section 279.59, and the additional funding
21 established by the board can be used for purposes of
22 facilities-related costs associated with reducing class size
23 in grades one through three.

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