MAR 12 1997
EDUCATION

HOUSE FILE 593
BY MASCHER

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 school attendance task
2 force pilot project program and making an appropriation.
3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:
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1 Section 1. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. There is appropriated
2 from the general fund of the state to the department of
3 education for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 1997, and
4 ending June 30, 1998, the following amount, or so much thereof
5 as is necessary, to be used for the purpose designated:
6 For purposes of the school attendance task force project
7 program established in section 299.12:
8 ..... $ 250,000
9 Sec. 2. Section 256.9, Code 1997, is amended by adding the
10 following new subsection:
11 NEW SUBSECTION. 49. If funds are appropriated by the
12 general assembly for the program, establish and coordinate, as
13 provided in section 299.12, a school attendance task force
14 pilot project program, and publish and disseminate a school
15 attendance task force guide, create a grant application
16 process and applications forms, and provide technical
17 assistance to school attendance task force pilot project
18 program grant recipients as provided in section 299.13.
19 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 299.12 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TASK FORCE
20 PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM ESTABLISHED.
21 If the general assembly appropriates moneys for the
22 establishment of a school attendance task force pilot project
23 program, the department of education shall establish and
24 coordinate a school attendance task force pilot project
25 program, as provided in this section and section 299.13, to
26 effectuate collaborative, positive interventions for truant
27 students with multiple needs in order to satisfactorily fill
28 the basic needs of the truant student and improve the
29 student's attendance. The program shall provide for the
30 establishment of school attendance task force projects for a
31 school year, which shall be located in at least five public
32 school districts. A grant may be awarded to a consortium of
33 school districts that meet the requirements provided in
34 section 299.13. The department shall establish and administer
35 not less than one grant to a large school district, one grant

1 to a medium-sized school district, and one grant to a small
2 school district, and districts shall be selected from both
3 rural and urban areas. For purposes of this section a large
4 school district is a district with an actual enrollment of
5 five thousand or more pupils; a medium-sized school district
6 is a district with an actual enrollment that is greater than
7 one thousand one hundred ninety-nine pupils, but less than
8 five thousand pupils; and a small school district is a
9 district with an actual enrollment of one thousand one hundred
10 ninety-nine or fewer pupils.
11 Sec. 4. NEW SECTION. 299.13 GRANT CRITERIA -- TASK FORCE
12 MEMBERS.
13 1. If the general assembly appropriates moneys for the
14 establishment of a school attendance task force pilot project
15 program as provided in section 299.12 and this section, the
16 department of education shall gather information relative to
17 successful truancy prevention and intervention programs and
18 shall publish the information gathered in a school attendance
19 task force guide to be disseminated to public school districts
20 by September 1 biennially. Within the initial guide, to be
21 published and disseminated by September 1, 1997, the
22 department shall include the criteria and process to be used
23 in selecting school attendance task force project grant
24 recipients.
25 2. Criteria for the selection of grant recipients shall
26 include, but is not limited to, a method for prioritizing
27 grant applications based on illustrated efforts to meet the
28 multiple needs of the truants and their families. Criteria
29 for the selection shall also include a requirement that the
30 task force members will include representatives from the
31 school district or from a consortium of school districts, the
32 office of the county attorney, the department of human
33 services, local police and county sheriff's department, and
34 the area juvenile court office, working together under a
35 chapter 28E agreement. Evidence of excessive truancy

1 intervention needs may entitle a grant application to
2 priority, if the application includes methods of amelioration
3 of the problem through mediation with a student and the
4 student's parent, guardian, or legal or actual custodian.
5 3. The department shall create a grant application process
6 and application forms and shall provide technical assistance
7 to grant recipients to establish school attendance task force
8 projects.
9 4. Grant recipients shall provide the department of
10 education adequate assurance that district school attendance
11 policies will be reviewed.
12 5. Grant recipients shall convene a meeting of the schools
13 within the area, the county attorney, and a representative of
14 the area juvenile court office to review the support structure
15 needed to improve school attendance.
16 6. Notwithstanding section 8.33, unencumbered or
17 unobligated funds remaining on June 30 of the fiscal year for
18 which the funds were appropriated shall not revert but shall
19 be available for expenditure for the following fiscal year for
20 the purposes of this section and section 299.12.
21 EXPLANATION
22 This bill appropriates $250,000 from the general fund of
23 the state to the department of education for the 1997-1998
24 fiscal year for purposes of the school attendance task force
25 project program, which is also established under the bill.
26 The department of education is charged with establishing
27 and coordinating a school attendance task force pilot project
28 program to effectuate collaborative, positive interventions
29 for truant students with multiple needs in order to
30 satisfactorily fill the basic needs of the truant student and
31 improve the student's attendance.
32 Five project grants are to be awarded to school districts,
33 or a consortium of school districts, of various sizes that are
34 selected from both rural and urban areas.
35 The department is directed to gather, publish, and

1 disseminate to school districts, biennially, information
2 relative to successful truancy prevention and intervention
3 programs. Within the initial guide, to be published and
4 disseminated by September 1, 1997, the department shall
5 include the criteria and process to be used in selecting grant
6 recipients.
7 The department is directed to include in its criteria a
8 requirement that the task force members include
9 representatives from the school district or from a consortium
10 of school districts, the office of the county attorney, the
11 department of human services, local police and county
12 sheriff's department, and the area juvenile court office.
13 Grant recipients shall provide the department of education
14 adequate assurance that district school attendance policies
15 will be reviewed. Grant recipients are directed to convene a
16 meeting of the schools within the area, the county attorney,
17 and a representative of the area juvenile court office to
18 review the support structure needed to improve school
19 attendance.
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