

House File 2490 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 2490
BY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(SUCCESSOR TO HF 2370)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act requiring the director of the department of education to
2 establish a low-income student and poverty weighting work
3 group.
4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. POVERTY WEIGHTING WORK GROUP.

2 1. School funding in Iowa has not evolved as the
3 demographics of Iowa students have changed significantly, with
4 little funding formula attention in Iowa's system targeted
5 to supporting socioeconomically disadvantaged students. In
6 order to meet the needs of such students and to ensure access
7 to the same opportunities that economically advantaged school
8 districts offer, school districts with higher percentages of
9 students in poverty in successful schools across the nation
10 spend more per pupil to cover the cost of the students'
11 increased needs as compared to economically advantaged school
12 districts. Children from economically disadvantaged homes
13 often enter school with a more limited vocabulary and fewer
14 educational life experiences than those from economically
15 advantaged homes. According to the child and family policy
16 center, children living in poverty are more likely than
17 their peers to experience stress and deprivation that hinders
18 development and readiness for school and life. Significant
19 levels of poverty exist in all ninety-nine counties of this
20 state and, therefore, the general assembly should consider
21 additional ways to close the opportunity gap within the funding
22 formula.

23 2. According to the 2019 condition of education annual
24 report, forty-three percent of Iowa students are eligible
25 for free and reduced price meals under the federal National
26 School Lunch Act and the federal Child Nutrition Act of 1966,
27 42 U.S.C. §1751-1785, the most widely used measure of student
28 poverty, including within Iowa's methodology for funding
29 at-risk programs.

30 3. The school finance formula review committee established
31 under section 257.1, subsection 4, met on December 13, 2019,
32 and recommended to the general assembly the creation of a
33 poverty weighting study committee.

34 4. The director of the department of education shall
35 establish and appoint members to a work group to examine the

1 impact of student poverty on Iowa students' success, including
2 relative concentration of poverty in school districts and
3 alternative methodologies demonstrated to provide supports
4 necessary to close the opportunity gap, including examination
5 of relevant studies and testimony of relevant experts. The
6 work group shall also determine if the current methodology
7 effectively measures the needs of low-income students and shall
8 make recommendations for funding methodologies to provide
9 additional funding required for school districts to provide the
10 supports necessary to deliver successful outcomes for students
11 from low-income households. The department of education shall
12 work cooperatively to provide staffing assistance for the work
13 group. The work group shall be composed of at least all of the
14 following:

15 a. One member representing the Iowa association of school
16 boards.

17 b. One member representing the area education agencies.

18 c. One member representing the Iowa state education
19 association.

20 d. One member representing the school administrators of
21 Iowa.

22 e. One member representing the urban education network of
23 Iowa.

24 f. One member representing the rural school advocates of
25 Iowa.

26 g. One member representing the professional educators of
27 Iowa.

28 h. One representative of the school district with the
29 highest basic enrollment under section 257.6 for the school
30 budget year beginning July 1, 2020.

31 i. One representative of a school district with a basic
32 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
33 beginning July 1, 2020, that is ranked in the highest one-third
34 among all school districts in the state.

35 j. One representative of a school district with a basic

1 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
2 beginning July 1, 2020, that is ranked in the middle one-third
3 among all school districts in the state.

4 k. One representative of a school district with a basic
5 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
6 beginning July 1, 2020, that is ranked in the lowest one-third
7 among all school districts in the state.

8 l. One representative of a school district located in whole
9 or in part less than one hundred miles from the eastern border
10 of this state.

11 m. One representative of a school district located in whole
12 or in part more than one hundred miles from both the eastern
13 border of this state and the western border of this state.

14 n. One representative of a school district located in whole
15 or in part less than one hundred miles from the western border
16 of this state.

17 o. Four ex officio, nonvoting legislative members
18 consisting of the following:

19 (1) Two state senators, one appointed by the majority leader
20 of the senate and one appointed by the minority leader of the
21 senate.

22 (2) Two state representatives, one appointed by the speaker
23 and one appointed by the minority leader of the house of
24 representatives.

25 5. By January 2, 2021, the work group shall submit
26 recommendations to the general assembly and the governor
27 for new or modified funding methodologies for students from
28 low-income households.

29 EXPLANATION

30 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
31 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

32 This bill directs the director of the department of
33 education to establish and appoint members to a work group to
34 examine various topics related to Iowa's current methodology
35 for determining levels of student poverty and funding related

H.F. 2490

1 to students from low-income households. The bill directs
2 the department of education to work cooperatively to provide
3 staffing assistance for the work group and establishes the
4 minimum persons comprising the work group. By January 2, 2021,
5 the work group is required to submit recommendations to the
6 general assembly and the governor for new or modified funding
7 methodologies for students from low-income households.