

House File 477 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 477

BY MATSON, SORENSEN, and
SIEGRIST

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. In recognition of the supplemental assistance for
3 high-need schools under section 284.11 originally enacted for
4 the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2014, and in preparation
5 for the school finance formula review committee scheduled to
6 meet during the 2024 legislative interim to review provisions
7 of Iowa's school foundation formula, it is the intent of the
8 general assembly that a work group be convened by the Iowa
9 department of education to consider what learning gaps are
10 evident in Iowa based on socioeconomic status, identify what
11 promising practices are occurring in Iowa and other states to
12 minimize these learning gaps, and review the funding provided
13 in other states for the instruction of children from low-income
14 families. Since significant levels of poverty exist in all
15 ninety-nine counties of this state, the general assembly should
16 consider additional ways to close the opportunity gap through
17 the school funding formula.

18 2. According to the 2022 condition of education annual
19 report, forty and seven-tenths percent of Iowa public school
20 students are eligible for free and reduced price meals under
21 the federal National School Lunch Act and the federal Child
22 Nutrition Act of 1966, 42 U.S.C. §1751-1785, the most widely
23 used measure of student poverty, including within Iowa's
24 methodology for funding at-risk programs.

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

29 4. The director of the department of education shall
30 establish and appoint members to a work group to examine the
31 impact of student poverty on Iowa students' success, including
32 relative concentration of poverty in school districts and
33 alternative methodologies demonstrated to provide supports
34 necessary to close the opportunity gap, including examination
35 of relevant studies and testimony of relevant experts. The

1 work group shall also determine if the current methodology
2 effectively measures the needs of low-income students and shall
3 make recommendations for funding methodologies to provide
4 additional funding required for school districts to provide the
5 supports necessary to deliver successful outcomes for students
6 from low-income households. The department of education shall
7 work cooperatively to provide staffing assistance for the work
8 group. The work group shall be composed of at least all of the
9 following:

10 a. One member representing the Iowa association of school
11 boards.

12 b. One member representing the area education agencies who
13 has expertise in special education services.

14 c. One member representing the Iowa state education
15 association.

16 d. One member representing the school administrators of
17 Iowa.

18 e. One member representing the urban education network of
19 Iowa.

20 f. One member representing the rural school advocates of
21 Iowa.

22 g. One member representing the professional educators of
23 Iowa.

24 h. One representative of the school district with the
25 highest basic enrollment under section 257.6 for the school
26 budget year beginning July 1, 2023.

27 i. One representative of a school district with a basic
28 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
29 beginning July 1, 2023, that is ranked in the highest one-third
30 among all school districts in the state.

31 j. One representative of a school district with a basic
32 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
33 beginning July 1, 2023, that is ranked in the middle one-third
34 among all school districts in the state.

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

1 enrollment under section 257.6 for the school budget year
2 beginning July 1, 2023, that is ranked in the lowest one-third
3 among all school districts in the state.

4 1. One representative of a school district located in whole
5 or in part less than one hundred miles from the eastern border
6 of this state.

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

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

13 o. The director of the department of health and human
14 services, or the director's designee.

15 p. Four ex officio, nonvoting legislative members
16 consisting of the following:

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

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

23 5. By January 2, 2024, the work group shall submit
24 recommendations to the general assembly and the governor for
25 new or modified funding methodologies that demonstrate positive
26 results for lowering achievement gaps and improving outcomes
27 for students from low-income households.

28 EXPLANATION

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

31 This bill directs the director of the department of
32 education to establish and appoint members to a work group to
33 examine various topics related to Iowa's current methodology
34 for determining levels of student poverty and funding related
35 to students from low-income households. The bill directs

H.F. 477

1 the department of education to work cooperatively to provide
2 staffing assistance for the work group and establishes the
3 minimum persons comprising the work group. By January 2, 2024,
4 the work group is required to submit recommendations to the
5 general assembly and the governor for new or modified funding
6 methodologies that demonstrate positive results for lowering
7 achievement gaps and improving outcomes for students from
8 low-income households.