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**SFA****BILL ANALYSIS**

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Senate Bill 898 (as introduced 2-19-98)  
Sponsor: Senator Joanne G. Emmons  
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 2-25-98

### **CONTENT**

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to require the board of a school district or local act school district or the board of directors of a public school academy to ensure that a pupil enrolled in grade eight or below, other than a pupil eligible for special education programs and services, would not advance to the next grade level at the end of a school year unless it had been determined that the pupil was reading at least at his or her current grade level.

Proposed MCL 380.1282a

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would have an indeterminate fiscal impact on State and local government. School districts could incur additional costs in determining annually if each pupil in grade 8 or below (excluding special education pupils) was reading at grade level. Depending on the number of students a district was required to retain, districts could incur costs in reconfiguring buildings and staff assignments to accommodate the retained students. There is the potential that the bill could be interpreted as a State mandate under Article IX, Section 29 of the State Constitution. If such a determination were made, the State would be required to pay the necessary cost of the program.

The number of students who are not reading at grade level is unknown. On the MEAP reading exam administered in 1996, approximately 22.2% or 25,500 4th graders statewide performed in the low category. Among 7th grades taking the MEAP test that year, approximately 26.9% or 30,800 students performed in the low category.

Fiscal Analyst: E. Pratt

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