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BILL



ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 757 (Substitute S-4 as reported by the Committee of the Whole) *(as passed by the Senate)*
Sponsor: Senator Roger Kahn, M.D.
Committee: Education

Date Completed: 3-2-10

RATIONALE

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 provides \$4.35 billion to support the "Race to the Top Fund". Money in the Fund is to be distributed to states that adopt education reforms meeting certain requirements. To qualify for a Race to the Top (RTTT) grant, a state must demonstrate, among other things, that it has made progress in improving teacher effectiveness, improving academic content standards and student achievement standards, and supporting struggling schools. In 2009, the Michigan Legislature passed a package of bills to help meet those requirements, and the Governor signed those bills into law on January 4, 2010. It has been suggested that additional measures could help to improve the State's chances of receiving an RTTT grant. Specifically, some believe that the process for developing an educational development plan for each pupil should be revised to prepare students better for success in high school and in their chosen careers.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Revised School Code to require each pupil to review his or her educational development plan (EDP) in 8th grade and revise the plan as appropriate before entering high school.

Currently, the board of a school district or public school academy (PSA) must ensure that each pupil has the opportunity in 7th grade to develop an EDP, and that each pupil has developed an EDP before he or she begins high school.

Under the bill, instead, the board of a school district or PSA would have to provide each pupil with the opportunity to develop an EDP during 7th grade, and ensure that each pupil reviewed the plan during 8th grade and revised it as appropriate before beginning high school.

The Code requires that an EDP be developed by the pupil under the supervision of his or her school counselor or other designee who is qualified to act in a counseling role and is selected by the high school principal. The plan must be based on a career pathways program or similar career exploration program. Under the bill, the plan also would have to be based on high school readiness scores, and would have to be designed to assist pupils to identify career development goals as they relate to academic requirements.

The Code states that if a pupil receives special education services, a school psychologist also should participate in developing the pupil's educational development plan. The bill would delete that provision.

The bill would take effect on July 1, 2011.

MCL 380.1278b

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

Public schools today offer a wide variety of courses that can help pupils develop the skills to be successful in their chosen careers. To take full advantage of those available options, a pupil should develop some sense of what he or she would like to do once leaving school. Specific goals can have a profound impact on the path that a student takes through high school and beyond. The function of an educational development plan is to help the pupil think about the options and identify courses that will allow him or her to achieve those career goals.

The process of developing an educational development plan gives the student a chance to consult with teachers, counselors, and other adults to determine the right mix of courses to match his or her goals and interests. Individual planning in the 7th and 8th grades can help a pupil be successful in high school. The bill would make that process more effective, by giving a pupil the opportunity to revise the plan as necessary to reflect changing circumstances, including academic performance and other factors.

In addition, the bill could improve the State's application for RTTT funding. The eligibility criteria include a requirement that a state demonstrate that it is taking steps to implement high-quality standards and assessments and support students in the transition to those standards and assessments. Michigan has done that by enacting the Michigan Merit Standard, which requires all public high school pupils to complete certain credit requirements in order to receive a high school diploma. The bill would help to prepare each pupil to meet that challenge successfully.

Legislative Analyst: Curtis Walker

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: Kathryn Summers

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.