

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2056

Title: *An act relating to educational grants.*

Brief Description: *Authorizing educational grants to parents or guardians of home-schooled children.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Mason, Tokuda, Wolfe, Dunn, Johnson, Bush, Backlund, B. Thomas, Smith, Cooke, Skinner and Lantz.*

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Meeting Date: *March 3, 1997.*

Bill Analysis Prepared by: *Joe Hauth (786-7111).*

Background: *The Legislature authorized home-based instruction in 1985. Home-based instruction consists of planned and supervised instructional and related educational activities, including instruction in occupational education, science, mathematics, language, social studies, history, health, reading, writing, spelling, and development of an appreciation for art and music. The parent is responsible for instructing the child. A parent who provides home-based instruction to his or her child must:*

- *File annually a declaration of intent to provide home-based instruction to the local school district superintendent;*
- *Ensure that test scores, academic progress, immunization records, and any records relating to educational activities are forwarded to any public or private school to which the child transfers;*
- *Ensure that a standard achievement test is administered to the child by a qualified person, or that the annual assessment of the child's educational progress is written by a certificated person who is working in the field of education; and*
- *Make a good faith effort to remedy any educational deficiencies.*

The parent is responsible for decisions relating to education philosophy or doctrine, selecting books, teaching materials, curriculum methods, and evaluation. The parent is also responsible for providing materials and equipment to meet the student's home-based instruction needs.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction estimates that there were approximately 18,074 home-school reported enrollees in 1995.

In the 1996-97 school year, total state and federal revenue per common school pupil was \$5,971.

Summary of Bill: *Educational grants are created to support the parents, guardians, or custodians of a child receiving home-based instruction, to redirect funding to local levels, encourage educational competition and diversity, and reduce state costs and bureaucracy. The grant program is voluntary. The state treasurer must award the grants annually to each certified child completing each year of home-based instruction beginning in the 1997-98 school year.*

To apply for the grant, the parent must file a statement at the end of the school year with the local school district superintendent certifying that the child successfully completed the school year under home-based instruction that was free from sectarian control or influence. Within 30 days of receiving the certification statement, the school district must ask the state treasurer to pay five percent of the average amount spent by the state toward the education of each child enrolled in state public schools during the same school year. The state treasurer must pay the amount due to the parent within thirty days of the request for payment by the district superintendent.

A home school is presumed to be free from sectarian control or influence based on the certification statement, and only minimum state controls may be used to implement the program. The grant program does not authorize home visits, curriculum, or student or instructor examinations by state employees, or increasing state controls by any state agency or employee over any parent, guardian, custodian, or child. The certification statement serves as the sole basis of state audits of grants.

Fiscal Note: *Requested on February 26, 1997.*

Effective Date: *Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.*