

Education Committee

HB 1974

Brief Description: *Changing the state special education funding formula.*

Sponsors: *Representatives Haigh, Jarrett, Cox, Doumit, Schoesler, Jackley, Talcott, Hatfield, Mulliken, McIntire, Hurst, Linville, Schual-Berke, Fromhold, G. Chandler, Keiser, Barlean, Kenney, Benson, Quall, Lantz, McDermott, Kessler, Grant, Santos, Rockefeller, Eickmeyer, Simpson, Hunt, Mitchell, Ogden, Conway and Pearson.*

Hearing Date: *2/21/01*

Staff: *Susan Morrissey (786-7111).*

Background:

Before the 1995-96 school year, the special education allocation formula was designed to provide full funding for special education. However, special education students were not included in basic education funding formulas for the time that students spent in the special education program. The formula was revised by the Legislature, after a thorough study by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee. The current formula includes special education and basic education funding for students in kindergarten through grade twelve. It also includes funding for special education students from birth to kindergarten and a safety net for districts that have demonstrable funding needs beyond the combined special education and basic education funding formulas.

In addition to funding for basic education, school districts receive a special education allocation for every special education student who is enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade. The districts receive the same level of per student special education funding for special education students aged three and four. The districts receive a richer funding formula for special education students from birth through age two. The districts do not receive basic education funding for students who are not yet enrolled in kindergarten. In addition, the funding formula limits the amount of special education funding available to districts that enroll more than 12.7 percent of their students in special education.

The funding formula for special education is calculated as follows:

The annual average headcount of birth through age 2,

*times the district's 1999-2000 basic education allocation rate per student,
times 1.15 percent, plus
the annual average headcount of age 3 to 21 special education enrollment, limited to a
maximum of 12.7 percent of the annual average K-12 resident FTE basic education
enrollment,
times the district's 1999-2000 BEA allocation rate per student,
times .9309.*

Summary of Bill:

The state funding formula for special education will exclude from any funding limits those students for whom school districts do not receive basic education monies.

Appropriation: *None.*

Fiscal Note: *February 21, 2001.*

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