

HOUSE BILL ANALYSIS

HB 2000

Title: An act relating to parental and community involvement grants.

Brief Description: Creating parental and community grant program.

Sponsors: Representatives Santos, Talcott, Quall, Schual-Berke, Stensen, Keiser, Conway and Veloria.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Meeting Date: February 25, 1999.

Bill Analysis Prepared by: Suzi Morrissey (786-7111).

Background: According to the 1995 National Education Goals Report, increased family involvement is associated with enhanced student achievement and improved student behavior. Positive outcomes of family involvement include higher mathematics and reading scores; better report card grades; improved attendance; improved behavior; improved attitudes in middle and high school; reduced likelihood that a student will repeat a grade or be in the lower half of his/her class; and decreased likelihood that a student will be suspended or expelled from school.

The U.S. Department of Education reported in its publication, "Strong Families, Strong Schools," that (1) teachers rated strengthening parental involvement in their children's education as the most important educational policy priority in the coming years; (2) that nearly half of 14- to 17-year-olds reported that they would like to talk to their parents more about school work; and (3) that nine out of 10 business executives rated lack of parental involvement as the biggest obstacle to school reform. Many family involvement programs involve long-term intervention to help students complete high school and continue on to higher education.

Summary of Bill: The Parental and Community Involvement Grant Program is created. The purpose of the voluntary program is to help parents and other community members work as volunteers in school. The program will facilitate these volunteer efforts through providing state funds for volunteer coordinators. The program is a pilot program that intends to fund at least one hundred applicants during the upcoming biennium.

The program will be administered by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, in conjunction with parent groups and principals' organizations. Schools or school districts may apply for grants of up to \$16,000 per school. Applicants are required to

match state funds with money or in-kind contributions. The applicant will match the state's efforts in a ratio of 30 percent local effort to 70 percent state funding.

Each applicant must submit a plan that describes how the volunteers will be used to achieve educational goals, including the state's learning goals. Applicants are encouraged to adopt the goal of convincing at least 40 percent of the school's parents to each volunteer in the school for at least 15 hours per year. The plan will also include a reporting component. The Superintendent will evaluate each applicant's plan on its quality, the needs of students at the school, and the probability that the school's volunteer efforts will help enhance student learning. The SPI will also evaluate the results of the program. In addition, the SPI will try to maximize the number of schools and school districts funded under the program.

The program expires on June 30, 2001.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 18, 1999..

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