
Education Committee

HB 1613

Brief Description: Creating the schoolwide academic achievement bonus program.

Sponsors: Representatives Anderson, Priest, Haler, Strow, Haigh and Hunter.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Creates a schoolwide academic achievement bonus of \$200 per student for schools that demonstrate exemplary performance in combined mathematics and reading scores on the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.
- Makes "challenged" schools with low mathematics and reading scores three years prior eligible for the bonus for significant improvement in their scores.
- Allows teachers and staff to determine how the bonus is used, which can be for materials, supplies, temporary staff, or payments to individuals.
- Makes principals in qualifying schools eligible for a \$20,000 bonus.

Hearing Date: 2/9/07

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

Several states, as part of their school accountability systems, have a program for making financial awards on a schoolwide basis to teachers and staff in high-performing schools. Two of the largest such award programs are in North Carolina and Florida.

In North Carolina, the ABC Award system is based on a school's improvement, measured by a composite of factors, and then compared to the improvement that would be statistically expected from that school. Teachers in schools that meet their expected growth target receive \$750 and instructional assistants receive \$375. Teachers in schools that exceed their expected growth targets receive \$1,500 and instructional assistants receive \$500. For elementary and middle

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schools, the performance factors are based on reading and mathematics scores on the state test. For high schools, test scores in other subjects are included as factors, along with dropout and graduation rates. For 2005-06, 1,275 schools qualified for an award (54 percent of all schools in the state) for a total cost of about \$110 million.

Based on student scores on the state test Florida rewards both high performance and improved performance. All schools accumulate points based on several factors related to student scores and receive a letter grade. Awards under the Florida School Recognition Program go to schools that earn an "A" or improve a letter grade from the previous year. Awards are \$100 per student and can be used for staff bonuses, nonrecurring expenses for equipment or materials, or temporary staff. The school's staff and advisory council determine how the awards are distributed. For 2005-06, 1,800 schools received an award (47 percent of all Florida schools) for a total cost of \$158 million.

Summary of Bill:

The schoolwide academic achievement bonus program is created to recognize and reward teachers, staff, and principals in schools that demonstrate exemplary performance and in "challenged schools" that demonstrate significant performance improvement.

Bonus. Qualifying schools are eligible for a bonus of \$200 per student up to a maximum of \$150,000. Teachers and staff assigned to the school collectively determine how to spend the bonus, which can be used for materials, supplies, equipment, and services; temporary hiring of teachers or staff; or payments to individual teachers and staff. If the teachers and staff cannot agree by November 15, the school district superintendent determines how to spend the bonus for the benefit of the school. These decisions are not subject to collective bargaining. The principal in a qualifying school is also eligible for a bonus of up to \$20,000.

Qualifying Schools. There are two categories under which a school could qualify for a bonus:

1. ***Exemplary Performance.*** To identify schools with exemplary performance, the State Board of Education (SBE) develops a performance index score for each school. Fifty percent of the index score is the percent of students in the school who met the state standard on the most recent Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), and 50 percent of the index score is the *increase* in the percent of students who met the state standard on the WASL compared to the prior year. The index score uses a composite of reading and mathematics results from grades 4, 7, and 10. Schools with more than one tested grade level have a score for each level. A school demonstrates exemplary performance if the performance index score is in the top 2 percent of schools with scores at the same grade level.
2. ***Significant Performance Improvement.*** To identify schools with significant performance improvement, the SBE first identifies "challenged" schools. A challenged school is one where the percent of students who met the state standard on the WASL three years prior was in lowest 10 percent of schools with scores at the same grade level. This analysis also uses a composite of reading and mathematics results from grades 4, 7, and 10. A challenged school demonstrates significant performance improvement if the percent of students who met the state standard on the most recent WASL has increased over the previous three years more than one standard deviation above the mean of all schools with scores at the same grade level.

A school is not eligible to receive bonuses for both exemplary performance and significant performance improvement in the same year. A school that qualifies based on scores in more than one grade level only receives one award.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 30, 2007.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.