

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

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**Subject:** Recommendations on a uniform statewide grading scale

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### Overview

Schools traditionally use a grading system based on letter, numeric, or percentage scores to record and report students' classroom performance. Schools' grading policies, student performance measures, and report cards can lead to practical questions about whether to use number or letter grades, how to differentiate grades for students who take advanced-level courses, for example, and the effect of grading on student motivation and self-esteem. The grading policies also can lead to policy questions about the purpose of grades and how effective grades are in communicating student progress and achievement. This bill directs the education commissioner to convene an advisory task force composed of representatives of the education community charged with recommending a statewide uniform grading scale consistent with state academic standards.

#### Section

- 1** **Advisory task force to recommend a Minnesota uniform grading scale.** Directs the education commissioner to convene an advisory task force by June 30, 2004 to recommend whether and how to develop and adopt a statewide uniform grading scale consistent with state academic standards. Includes superintendents, principals, teachers, school board members, students and representatives of public and private post secondary institutions as task force members. Allows the task force to hold public meetings to gather input. Directs the task force to present recommendations to the commissioner by December 1, 2004 on topics including: (1) consistent numerical breaks for letter grades; (2) standards to define an

**Section**

honors course; (3) appropriate course weightings; and (4) courses and weightings to be used in calculating students' class rank. Requires the commissioner to report the task force recommendations to the legislature's education chairs by February 1, 2005. Causes the task force to expire on February 1, 2005.

Makes this section effective immediately.