

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: Olsen and others

Subject: Recommendations for a turn-around specialist program

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Overview

This proposal directing a working group to make recommendations for school administrators to serve as turn-around specialists in consistently low-performing schools is modeled after a proposal by Virginia's Governor Warner. Virginia's proposal is premised on the idea that the principal is critical to setting a school's tone and, if a school is a consistently low-performing school, that principal should be replaced. Virginia plans to identify school administrators having good skills and experience, train them in proven business management strategies, credential them as "turnaround specialists" and send them into consistently low-performing schools with the expectation that they will recreate a successful learning environment. Turn-around specialists work under a contract with a local school system that establishes their responsibilities, educational goals, measures of success, extent of their authority and any additional state or local compensation or other employment benefits available to them. Turn-around specialists are assigned to schools based on schools' expressed interest, schools' consistent failure to meet state and federal education accountability goals or at parents' request.

This bill proposes to establish a working group of interested and affected stakeholders to make recommendations for a turn-around specialist program in Minnesota beginning in the 2005-2006 school year.

Section

1 Recommendations for turn-around specialists. (a) Directs the education commissioner

Section

and the board of school administrators to jointly convene a working group to make recommendations (1) for training school administrators as turn-around specialists charged with implementing education and business principles to turn-around the performance of consistently low-performing schools and (2) for creating a support network, administrative structure and follow-up training for the turn-around specialists assigned to low-performing schools.

Anticipates that the program will: train and credential licensed school administrators as experts in using business and educational management principles to turn-around low-performing schools; train the first 10 program participants in the 2005-2006 school year in order to have them certified and serving as principals in low-performing schools for at least three years beginning in the 2006-2007 school year; and focus on successful business and education strategies, practical experiences and other management information that is useful in redirecting or "turning around" low-performing organizations.

(b) Requires the working group to include representatives of four-year post secondary institutions, school principals, business organizations, school boards, K-12 full-time public school classroom teachers who are currently teaching, school business officials and school administrators. Directs the education commissioner and the board of school administrators by February 1, 2005, to submit the working group recommendations to the legislature.

(c) Declares that the terms, compensation and removal of working group members is governed by the statutory provision on advisory task forces. Causes the working group to expire on February 1, 2005.

Makes this section effective immediately.