

# HOUSE RESEARCH

## Bill Summary

**FILE NUMBER:** H.F. 3504

**DATE:** March 21, 2006

**Version:** As introduced

**Authors:** Buesgens

**Subject:** Authorizing general education access grants for students

**Analyst:** Lisa Larson, 651-296-8036

This publication can be made available in alternative formats upon request. Please call 651-296-6753 (voice); or the Minnesota State Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY) for assistance. Summaries are also available on our website at: [www.house.mn/hrd](http://www.house.mn/hrd).

---

### Overview

Proposes to make available education access grants for the tuition and fees that eligible students in the Minneapolis or St. Paul school district must pay to attend an accredited or commissioner-recognized school.

#### Section

#### **1 General education access grants.**

**Subd. 1. Enrollment.** (a) Makes a student enrolled in an accredited or commissioner-recognized elementary or secondary school eligible for a general education access grant if: (1) the student's household does not exceed 250 percent of federal poverty guidelines; (2) the student resides and is enrolled in the Minneapolis or St. Paul school district; and (3) the commissioner approves the student's grant application.

(b) Requires the commissioner, subject to paragraphs (c) and (d), to combine and decide on properly submitted applications by April 1 for the next school year and to decide on subsequent applications in the order they are received. Requires the commissioner to provide grant applicants written notice of their status.

(c) Limits the number of approved applications for resident students in each district in fiscal year 2007 to 3 percent of the district's student enrollment in the previous fiscal year. Requires the commissioner to select grant applicants by lot if the number of

## Section

applicants exceeds the limit established in this paragraph.

(d) Limits the number of approved applications for resident students in fiscal years 2008 through 2011 to a 3 percent increase over the preceding fiscal year. Exempts currently approved grant recipients from the selection by lot. Requires the commissioner to select other grant applicants by lot if the number of applicants exceeds the limit established in this paragraph. Limits the number of approved applications for resident students in fiscal year 2012 to the total number of approved applications in fiscal year 2011.

**Subd. 2. Funding.** (a) Requires the commissioner at least quarterly to transmit to the parent or guardian of an approved student applicant a check for the parent or guardian to restrictively endorse to the school providing instruction to the student. Declares that the access grant payments represent financial assistance to the parent or guardian who is primarily responsible for ensuring that the student receives instruction required by the state's compulsory attendance law.

(b) Limits the total amount of the access grant to the tuition and fees charged by the school in which the student is enrolled or the formula allowance, whichever is less. Limits school tuition and fee increases for students receiving access grants to the percent increase in the formula allowance between the preceding and current fiscal years. Directs the commissioner to recognize only tuition and fee charges that are equal to those charged to students who do not receive access grants.

(c) Requires the commissioner to obtain from a student's parent or guardian information about the student's school costs and enrollment status before making payments. Directs the commissioner to prorate payments for students enrolled only part of a school year.

(d) Directs the commissioner to withhold payments when the commissioner reasonably believes information about the student's school costs and enrollment is intentionally false. Directs the commissioner adopt guidelines for auditing and verifying submitted information.

(e) Allows school districts to include all, two-thirds and then one-third of resident students receiving access grants in the total pupil count for the first three fiscal years for purposes of calculating general education and other revenue. Directs the commissioner to reduce a district's state aid payments by the amount of access grant payments that resident students receive.

**Subd. 3. Assessment.** Requires students receiving access grants to take the same statewide tests that public school students take. Directs the commissioner to determine the time and location for administering the tests. Requires students' test results to be reported to the student's parent or guardian and the enrolling school. Requires the commissioner to report aggregate results to the public.

**Subd. 4. Conference.** Directs the commissioner to offer an informal conference to

**Section**

resolve the disputes of applicants and recipients adversely affected by an agency action.

Makes this section immediately effective.

- 2** **Annual general education aid appropriation.** Appropriates to the department the amount needed for general education access grants.

Makes this section immediately effective.