

HB 679 -- PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Kraus

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 15 to 0.

This bill requires the State Board of Education to adopt a policy by December 1, 2005, that encourages effective family involvement in education. The policy will apply when the state board interacts with school districts, parents, and members of the general public. The state board will consult with local districts to assist in the development of similar district policies, which must be adopted no later than March 1, 2006. Both the state board and local school boards' policies must promote, among other goals, communication, support and recognition of the role parents play, and inclusion of parents as full partners in educational decision-making. These policies must be reviewed at least once a year.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2006, FY 2007, and FY 2008.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that successful schools are ones in which parents feel welcome. The bill will focus districts' attention and help them evaluate their efforts to make families part of the education process.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Kraus; Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers; Missouri School Boards Association; Cooperating School Districts of Greater Kansas City; Missouri National Education Association; Missouri State Teachers Association; Missouri Federation of Teachers and School-Related Personnel; Missouri School Administrators Coalition; and Missouri Association of Elementary School Principals.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say the Missouri School Improvement Program does have some elements that address parental involvement, but it is unlikely that a district would lose accreditation based solely on low scores for parental involvement.

Others testifying on the bill was Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Becky DeNeve, Senior Legislative Analyst