

HB 490 -- A+ SCHOOLS PROGRAM

SPONSOR: Schad

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass by consent" by the Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 14 to 0.

Currently, two-year private vocational schools that provide services for A+ students must be accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, must be designated as nonprofit organizations, and are prohibited from receiving reimbursements in excess of the rate charged by a public community college. This bill clarifies that these requirements are applicable to private schools only and not to public vocational or technical schools.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2010, FY 2011, and FY 2012.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that an error last year disqualified public vocational schools by requiring them to have 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax status, which is a requirement for Rankin Tech, the only private vocational school that can accept A+ students. The bill clarifies that public vocational schools may accept A+ students without having a nonprofit status.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Schad; Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and Missouri National Education Association.

OPPOSERS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say community colleges have no objection to the bill.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Community College Association.