

HB 1920 -- Unaccredited School Districts

Sponsor: McNary

This bill changes the laws regarding unaccredited school districts. The bill allows an unaccredited school district to use foundation formula funding, including Classroom Trust Fund and Proposition C moneys, to support early childhood education programming, upon the adoption of a resolution by the district's governing body that early childhood programming is necessary for the improvement of the district's academic achievement and the approval of the State Board of Education of the rationale for the programming. A district may be required to reapply each year.

The state board may approve a pilot project for awarding teaching credentials not covered under Section 168.021, RSMo, at the district level in an unaccredited district. The district must demonstrate that it has a history of frequent or disproportionate employment of teachers who achieved certification with an alternative method, paraprofessionals, or permanent substitute teachers. The district must define teacher subject areas, grade levels, and functions for which it has a demonstrated need and for which it intends to develop a pilot certification program. A teacher candidate prepared under a district pilot program cannot be required to have a minimum number of college credits in the field of education as specified under Section 168.021 but must be required to achieve the score prescribed by the state board for certification for credit by examination. A district may recognize credentials based on specific teaching methods such as Montessori. The district must identify teachers of proven ability for designation as master teachers to take responsibility for the induction of beginning teachers selected under the pilot project, and the number of candidates must not exceed 5% of the total number of current classroom teachers in the district. Teachers in training will not be counted against the district as less than qualified for accreditation purposes. The department must report annually to the Joint Committee on Education on the effectiveness of the pilot project.

The provisions of the bill regarding the pilot project expire six years after the effective date.