

HCS SB 113 -- EDUCATION

SPONSOR: Dixon (Jones)

COMMITTEE ACTIONS: Voted "Do Pass with Amendments" by the Standing Committee on Emerging Issues by a vote of 9 to 0. Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Select Committee on General Laws by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill changes the laws regarding education. In its main provisions, the bill:

(1) Removes references to certain higher education provisions that have been repealed and replaces them with the current appropriate provisions;

(2) Changes the laws regarding gifted education. The bill prohibits school districts from determining whether a child is gifted based on the child's participation in an advanced placement course or international baccalaureate course. Whether a child is gifted must be determined using the statutory definition of "gifted children" in Section 162.720, RSMo. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, if a school district experiences a decrease of 20% or more in its gifted program enrollment from the previous school year, an amount equal to the product of the difference between the number of students enrolled in the gifted program in the current school year and the number of students enrolled in the previous school year multiplied by \$680 must be subtracted from the school district's current year payment amount;

(3) Specifies that any public school that participates in any activity sponsored by the Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) must provide a home school student, who resides in its attendance area, with the opportunity to participate in the activity on behalf of the public school in the same manner that the opportunity is provided to the students enrolled in the school. A home school student who participates or seeks to participate in an activity is subject to the same registration, age eligibility, fees, insurance, transportation, physical condition, qualifications, responsibilities, event schedules, standards of behavior, and performance requirements as enrolled students. The person who primarily provides home school instruction to the student must submit a written verification to the school that the student is receiving a passing grade in each course or subject taught and is maintaining satisfactory academic advancement. If the home school student was previously enrolled in a public school during a school year, the student is not authorized to participate during the remainder of that school year. The association cannot prohibit a home school student from participating in activities in

compliance with these provisions;

(4) Specifies that a student of a college or university who transfers to another higher education institution must not be required to earn a passing grade in a regular course of instruction in the constitutions of the United States and Missouri and in American history if the student has previously earned a passing grade in the course. The bill repeals the provisions requiring every high school student in any public or private school except private trade schools to satisfactorily pass an examination on the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and the Missouri Constitution and in American history and American institutions in order to receive a certificate of graduation but allows a public or private school other than private trade schools to require it. The bill establishes the Missouri Civics Education Initiative that requires, beginning January 1, 2016, every high school student attending any public, charter, or private school except private trade schools or a student seeking to complete a general educational development (GED) equivalency to, as a condition of high school graduation or its equivalent, take and receive a passing grade on a basic civics test similar to the civics portion of the United States Naturalization Test, produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). The test must use the same 100 questions used by the USCIS that are administered to applicants for United States citizenship. In order to receive a passing score on the test, the student must answer at least 60 of the questions correctly. Any student may take the test as many times as necessary for passage, but must receive a passing score prior to receiving a high school diploma, a certificate of high school graduation, or a high school equivalency certificate. Every public, charter, or private school except private trade schools and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must certify that a student has taken and received a passing grade on the test. Each school district must adopt a policy to permit the waiver of these requirements for any student with a disability if recommended by the student's individualized education program committee;

(5) Defines "financial need" as it applies to the Kids' Chance Scholarship Program and the provisions of Chapter 173 as the difference between the financial resources available to an applicant as determined by the Coordinating Board for Higher Education and the applicant's anticipated expenses while attending an approved private or public institution of postsecondary education. The board must employ a formula similar to nationally recognized comprehensive mechanisms for determining need;

(6) Requires the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to exempt any yoga teacher training course, program, or school from the

provisions regarding the regulation of proprietary schools regulation; and

(7) Changes the eligibility requirements for the Advantage Missouri Program by requiring an eligible student to establish financial need.

The provisions of the bill regarding the reduction in funding for gifted education will become effective July 1, 2016.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill updates current references to education provisions that have been repealed.

Testifying for the bill was Senator Dixon.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.