

SENATE

STATE OF MINNESOTA

EIGHTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

S.F. No. 812

(SENATE AUTHORS: JOHNSON, Nienow and Lourey)

DATE	D-PG	OFFICIAL STATUS
02/28/2013	438	Introduction and first reading Referred to Education
03/13/2013	932	Comm report: To pass and re-referred to Finance

1.1A bill for an act

1.2relating to education; creating a vision therapy pilot project; appropriating money.

1.3BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.4Section 1. **VISION THERAPY PILOT PROJECT.**

1.5Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** A grant is established to fund a vision therapy pilot

1.6project. The grant shall be administered by the commissioner of education as competitive

1.7three-year grants. An applicant for a grant must be a school district, charter school,

1.8consortium of school districts, or a tribal school.

1.9Subd. 2. **Pilot project.** (a) In the first year of the project, all second and third

1.10graders in a pilot school and all fourth and fifth graders with an individualized education

1.11program shall have a comprehensive eye examination. In the second and third year of

1.12the project, all second graders in a pilot school and all fourth graders who transfer into

1.13a pilot school with an individualized education plan shall have a comprehensive eye

1.14examination. In all years of the pilot project, all second through fifth grade students, who

1.15have not had a comprehensive eye examination through the pilot project and are put on

1.16an individualized education program for the first time shall have a comprehensive eye

1.17examination. The results of the comprehensive eye examination must be shared with the

1.18student's individualized education program team to determine whether vision therapy

1.19alone may be appropriate for the student and adjust the individualized education program

1.20accordingly. The parent or guardian of a student who qualifies for a comprehensive eye

1.21examination under this paragraph may submit a written notification to the school opting

1.22the student out of the examination.

1.23(b) In each year of the project, the school or district shall provide appropriate

1.24vision therapy to students as found necessary by the comprehensive eye examinations

under paragraph (a), and when appropriate, consistent with the interventions used in the Convergence Insufficiency Treatment Trial.

Subd. 3. Application. The applicant must submit a plan to the commissioner in the form and manner the commissioner determines. A school district or consortium of districts may limit their application to one or more schools within the district or consortium. The application must include:

- (1) the schools that will implement the pilot project;
- (2) who will provide the vision therapy;
- (3) how the vision and reading skills of students participating in the program will be evaluated before and after vision therapy;
- (4) how students will be monitored after receiving vision therapy; and
- (5) what additional reading interventions will be available to students after completion of the vision therapy program.

Subd. 4. Application review; grant awards. (a) Grant money must be paid to recipient schools or districts in the 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 school years. A preference may be given to applicants with a percentage of students with individualized education programs that exceeds the state average.

(b) Grants are awarded for a three-year time period. The commissioner may award the grant to one or more applicants. The amount of the grant in each year of the project may vary, if consistent with the plan details of the application.

(c) The commissioner must determine the amount of each grant based upon the number of screened children the grantee expects to serve.

Subd. 5. Evaluation. The commissioner of education must provide for an evaluation of the pilot project and must report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade 12 education policy and finance by January 15, 2018. The report must include an assessment of how many students who had individualized education programs and received a comprehensive eye exam and vision therapy no longer needed an individualized education program.

Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

Subdivision 1. Department of Education. The sums indicated in this section are appropriated from the general fund to the Department of Education for the fiscal year designated.

Subd. 2. Grants for vision therapy pilot project. For grants to implement a vision screening and therapy pilot project in schools and school districts under section 1:

- 3.1

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2014
- 3.2

This appropriation is available until expended.