

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; establishing a six-year pilot program to examine the impact
1.3 of school calendar arrangements on student learning; appropriating money.

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

1.5 Section 1. **ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL CALENDAR PILOT PROGRAM.**

1.6 Subdivision 1. **Establishment.** Notwithstanding Minnesota Statutes, sections
1.7 120A.41, 120A.415, or other law to the contrary, but consistent with Minnesota Statutes,
1.8 section 124D.128, a six-year alternative school calendar pilot program is established to
1.9 examine the impact of school calendar arrangements on student learning by comparing
1.10 students' academic gains in school districts and charter schools that use traditional and
1.11 nontraditional school calendars. The commissioner of education must structure the
1.12 program and select program participants with the purpose of comparing the impact of
1.13 traditional and nontraditional school calendars on:

- 1.14 (1) the amount of educational material students retain after school vacations;
1.15 (2) the educational enrichment opportunities and remedial help available to students
1.16 throughout the school year;
1.17 (3) the impact of the calendar on student attendance, student disciplinary actions,
1.18 and student achievement test scores; and
1.19 (4) the amount of time available to students and school staff for out-of-school
1.20 learning, vacations, and recreation.

1.21 Subd. 2. **Eligibility; application.** An interested school district, charter school, or
1.22 group of school districts or charter schools that participate for a particular purpose may
1.23 apply to the commissioner of education to participate in this pilot program in the form
1.24 and manner the commissioner determines. An applicant must identify in its application

the internal and external factors that it anticipates may determine its preference for a traditional or nontraditional school calendar, including the impact of the school calendar on: costs related to employee compensation, transportation, food, facility use throughout the calendar year, and facility maintenance; needs of at-risk students; number of instructional and staff development days; and the availability of extracurricular activities, community resources, and before and after-school care and child care. The commissioner may require an applicant to provide additional information.

Subd. 3. **Application review; grant awards.** When reviewing an application, the commissioner must determine whether the applicant met the requirements in subdivisions 1 and 2 and only an applicant that satisfies all the requirements is eligible to receive a grant under this section. The commissioner must distribute grant awards, to the extent feasible, on an equitable geographical basis. The commissioner must base the amount of the grant award on the number of students the grantee has enrolled in school and the length and structure of the grantee's school calendar. Grant expenditures must be consistent with budget information the grantee periodically submits to the commissioner.

Subd. 4. **Evaluation.** The commissioner must provide for an evaluation of the impact of school calendar arrangements on student learning, consistent with this section, and recommend to the Education Policy and Finance committees of the legislature by February 1, 2015, a preferred school calendar based upon demonstrated student achievement and the criteria listed in subdivision 1.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment and applies to the 2008-2009 through 2013-2014 school years, except that the commissioner of education must submit the requisite report to the legislature by February 1, 2015.

Sec. 2. APPROPRIATION.

\$2,000,000 is appropriated to the commissioner of education from the general fund in fiscal year 2009 for the purpose of establishing a six-year pilot program to examine the impact of an alternative school calendar under section 1.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective July 1, 2008.