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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 725

02/09/2015 Authored by Barrett, Newton, Hertaus, Erickson and Mariani
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Health and Human Services Reform

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; creating a vision therapy pilot project; appropriating money.

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

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

1.5 Subdivision 1. Establishment. A three-year grant program is established to fund
1.6 vision therapy pilot projects in up to four school districts.

1.7 Subd. 2. Pilot project. In each year of the pilot project, second and third grade
1.8 students identified by a set of criteria by the pilot school shall be admitted into the pilot
1.9 study. Identified students shall have a comprehensive eye examination with written
1.10 standard requirements of testing. Students identified with a diagnosis of convergence
1.11 insufficiency must undergo a vision efficiency evaluation by a licensed optometrist or
1.12 ophthalmologist trained in the evaluation of learning-related vision problems. The results
1.13 of this examination shall determine whether a student will qualify for neuro-optometric
1.14 vision therapy funded by the grant. The parent or guardian of a student who qualifies for
1.15 the pilot program under this paragraph may submit a written notification to the school
1.16 opting the student out of the program. Guidelines must be established to provide quality
1.17 standards and measures to ensure an appropriate diagnosis and treatment plan that is
1.18 consistent with the convergence insufficiency treatment trial study.

1.19 Subd. 3. Application. The applicant school district must submit a plan to the
1.20 commissioner of education in the form and manner the commissioner determines. A
1.21 charter school is not eligible to apply. The application must include:

1.22 (1) the school that will implement the pilot project;

2.1 (2) who will provide the comprehensive eye examination, visual efficiency
2.2 evaluation, and the neuro-optometric vision therapy treatment along with appropriate
2.3 licensure;

2.4 (3) how the vision and reading skills of students participating in the program will be
2.5 evaluated before and after vision therapy;

2.6 (4) how students' progress will be monitored during and after receiving
2.7 neuro-optometric vision therapy; and

2.8 (5) what additional reading interventions will be available to students after
2.9 completion of the neuro-optometric vision therapy program.

2.10 Subd. 4. **Application review; grant awards.** (a) Grant money must be paid to the
2.11 recipient districts in the 2015-2016, 2016-2017, and 2017-2018 school years.

2.12 (b) The grant is awarded for a three-year time period.

2.13 (c) The commissioner shall oversee the grant distribution.

2.14 (d) A grant shall be awarded to Independent School District No. 12, Centennial,
2.15 provided the district meets the application requirements in subdivision 3.

2.16 (e) A grant shall be awarded to an applicant district in each of the following
2.17 geographic areas:

2.18 (1) a district with its administrative offices located in a city of the first class;

2.19 (2) a district, not including Independent School District No. 12, Centennial, with
2.20 its administrative offices located in Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or
2.21 Washington County, but not in a city of the first class; and

2.22 (3) a district with its administrative offices not located in Anoka, Carver, Dakota,
2.23 Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, or Washington County, or a city of the first class.

2.24 Subd. 5. **Evaluation.** The commissioner of education must provide for an evaluation
2.25 of the pilot project and must report to the legislative committees with jurisdiction over
2.26 kindergarten through grade 12 education policy and finance by January 15, 2019.

2.27 Sec. 2. **APPROPRIATIONS.**

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

2.31 Subd. 2. **Grants for vision therapy pilot project.** For grants to implement a
2.32 neuro-optometric vision therapy pilot project:

2.33	<u>\$</u>	<u>1,000,000</u>	<u>.....</u>	<u>2016</u>
2.34	<u>\$</u>	<u>-0-</u>	<u>.....</u>	<u>2017</u>

3.1 This appropriation is available until expended.