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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-NINTH SESSION

H. F. No. 3566

03/24/2016 Authored by Christensen and Kahn

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Education Innovation Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to education; establishing an advisory group to develop recommendations
1.3 to design and implement a statewide outdoor place-based education plan;
1.4 establishing an outdoor place-based education program; requiring a report;
1.5 appropriating money.

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

1.7 Section 1. **CITATION.**

1.8 This act may be cited as the "Outdoor Place-Based Education Act."

1.9 Sec. 2. **DEFINITIONS.**

1.10 For purposes of this act, "outdoor place-based education" means the process of
1.11 using the local community and outdoor environment as a starting point to teach concepts
1.12 in language arts, mathematics, social studies, science, history, and other subjects across
1.13 the curriculum.

1.14 Sec. 3. **OUTDOOR PLACE-BASED EDUCATION ADVISORY GROUP.**

1.15 Subdivision 1. **Advisory group creation.** The outdoor place-based education
1.16 advisory group consists of the following 13 members:

1.17 (1) commissioners of the following agencies or their designees:

1.18 (i) the Department of Education; and

1.19 (ii) the Department of Natural Resources;

1.20 (2) 11 public members who have demonstrated an interest in outdoor skills and
1.21 education:

1.22 (i) one member appointed by Education Minnesota;

1.23 (ii) one member appointed by the Minnesota Rural Education Association;

2.1 (iii) one member appointed by the Minnesota School Boards Association;
2.2 (iv) one member appointed by the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools;
2.3 (v) one member appointed by the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota;
2.4 (vi) one public member appointed by the majority leader of the senate;
2.5 (vii) one public member appointed by the minority leader of the senate;
2.6 (viii) one public member appointed by the speaker of the house;
2.7 (ix) one public member appointed by the minority leader of the house of
2.8 representatives; and
2.9 (x) two public members appointed by the governor.

2.10 Subd. 2. **Advisory group duties; report required.** (a) The advisory group must
2.11 develop recommendations for the design and implementation of a statewide outdoor
2.12 place-based education plan for students in prekindergarten through grade 12. The advisory
2.13 group must report proposed recommendations to the chairs and ranking minority members
2.14 of the legislative committees with primary jurisdiction over kindergarten through grade
2.15 12 education policy by January 15, 2017.

2.16 (b) The report required under this subdivision must, at a minimum:

2.17 (1) recommend strategies for the integration of outdoor place-based education in
2.18 each of the subject areas required for statewide accountability under Minnesota Statutes,
2.19 section 120B.021, subdivision 1, including any staff development required to support
2.20 such integration;

2.21 (2) identify grades or grade ranges in which outdoor place-based education may
2.22 have the greatest impact, given limited staff and financial resources;

2.23 (3) recommend an assessment instrument that districts may use in order to evaluate
2.24 the impact of outdoor place-based education; and

2.25 (4) estimate the financial and human resources required to implement the
2.26 recommendations on a statewide basis.

2.27 Subd. 3. **Administrative provisions.** (a) The commissioner of education or the
2.28 commissioner's designee must convene the initial meeting of the advisory group by
2.29 September 15, 2016. Upon request of the advisory group, the commissioner must provide
2.30 meeting space and administrative services for the advisory group. The members of the
2.31 advisory group must elect a chair or cochair from the members of the advisory group at
2.32 the initial meeting.

2.33 (b) Public members of the advisory group serve without compensation, but may be
2.34 reimbursed for travel expenses.

2.35 (c) The advisory group expires February 2, 2017, or upon submission of the report
2.36 required under this section, whichever is earlier.

Subd. 4. **Deadline for appointments and designations.** The appointments and designations authorized under this section must be completed by August 15, 2016.

EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

Sec. 4. **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 years designated.

Subd. 2. **Outdoor place-based education program.** For a grant to Wilderness Inquiry for the outdoor place-based education program:

\$ -0- 2016

\$ 1,000,000 2017

Wilderness Inquiry, in collaboration with other outdoor place-based education providers, shall:

(1) provide for a literature review of the existing evidence of the effect of outdoor place-based education on educational outcomes and development of core competencies that lead to career and college success and deliver the literature review to the outdoor place-based education advisory group no later than November 15, 2016;

(2) select at least 30 school districts, charter schools, or school sites to participate in a two-year outdoor place-based education program based on the recommendations of the outdoor place-based education advisory group. To the extent possible, the participating schools shall be distributed equitably between urban, suburban, and rural regions; and

(3) evaluate the impact of outdoor place-based education on students in participating schools during the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years.

This appropriation is available until June 30, 2019. The base for fiscal year 2018 is \$2,000,000. The base for fiscal year 2020 and later is zero.

Subd. 3. **Outdoor place-based education advisory group.** For the outdoor place-based education advisory group:

\$ -0- 2016

\$ 20,000 2017

This is a onetime appropriation.