

HCS HB 2152 -- SCHOOL INNOVATION WAIVER

SPONSOR: Henderson

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 18 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 2152.

This bill provides a definition for "school innovation team" and for "school innovation waiver" and allows school innovation teams to submit a plan to the State Board of Education (SBE) for a state innovation waiver for a variety of purposes as outlined in the bill.

Plans submitted to the SBE must include the provision of law for which the waiver is being requested, as well as demonstrate the necessity of the waiver, provide measurable performance targets and goals, and demonstrate support for the plan, along with additional requirements as provided in the bill.

The bill provides the SBE specific criteria for the evaluation of submitted plans and permits the SBE to make modifications to the plan with the cooperation of the school innovation team.

School innovation waivers are only effective for three years beginning the school year following the approval and may be renewed. Only one waiver may be in effect per school at a time, and specific restrictions to statutory requirements relating to school start date, teacher certification, teacher tenure, or any requirement imposed by federal law, are applicable.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is required to publish an annual report documenting and providing data regarding the requested and granted waivers at the statewide, district, and school building levels to analyze specified trends and request modifications. This bill repeals section 161.210 RSMo relating to the current waiver provision.

This bill is similar to SB 662 (2022).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this provides an opportunity for schools to innovate without fear of repercussions in the

accreditation process. Schools that use these waivers might pilot new programs that will benefit their students and provide additional flexibility to explore opportunities in education that will address student's needs.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Henderson; Aligned; Missouri School Boards' Association; Missouri NEA; and Kate Casas, Excellence In Education In Action.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill would bureaucratically alter the structure of schools and reorder relationships among schools in districts or between districts.

Testifying against the bill were Mary K. Lindsay and Arnie C. AC Dienoff.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.