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BILL ANALYSIS

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House Bill 4719 (Substitute H-2 as passed by the House)  
Sponsor: Representative Tom Casperson  
House Committee: Education  
Senate Committee: Education

Date Completed: 10-15-03

### **CONTENT**

**The bill would amend the State School Aid Act to permit a school district or a public school academy (PSA) to count a pupil receiving all or a majority of his or her instruction through a distance learning program as a full-time pupil for school aid purposes, under certain conditions.**

To be eligible to receive State aid, districts must submit to the Department of Education the number of students enrolled and in regular attendance on a specified "count day" twice a year (the fourth Wednesday in September and the second Wednesday in February). A blend of these two numbers (80% of the September count, and 20% of the previous February's count) comprises the district's "membership". Districts receive a foundation allowance from the State for each pupil in membership.

Under the bill, for a school district or PSA to count a distance learner as a full-time pupil, the distance learning program would have to be operated by the school district or PSA, and all of the following conditions would have to be met:

- The pupil was unable to attend school on a regular basis because of a documented health condition affecting his or her ability to attend school regularly; because he or she had been expelled from school and was not counted in membership on a pro rata basis, as permitted under the Act; because the pupil was pregnant, or caring for a newborn child; or for any other valid reason, as determined by the board of the district or the board of directors of the PSA.
- The amount and content of the instruction the pupil was receiving through the distance learning program were substantially equivalent to the amount and content of instruction the pupil would receive if he or she were in attendance at school in the district or PSA.
- The district or PSA could track and document the days and hours of distance learning instruction provided to the pupil, and could verify the pupil's identity during his or her participation in the distance learning instruction.
- The number of pupils the district or public school academy counted in membership would not exceed 5% of the district's or PSA's total membership, or 25 pupils, whichever was greater.

MCL 388.1606

Legislative Analyst: Claire Layman

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

The bill would result in an indeterminate cost to the State. Currently, the State does not collect data on the number of pupils enrolled in distance learning programs; thus, the number of additional pupils who would be counted for a foundation allowance payment is unknown. The

provisions in this bill potentially would allow a district or charter school to receive a foundation allowance for every pupil enrolled in a distance learning program. The current average foundation allowance on a statewide basis is an estimated \$7,200 per pupil.

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.