

**REVENUE:** No revenue impact

**FISCAL:** Fiscal statement issued

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**Action:** Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed

**Vote:** 5 - 0 - 0

**Yeas:** Kruse, Metsger, Morse, Westlund, Walker

**Nays:** 0

**Exc.:** 0

**Prepared By:** Dana Richardson, Administrator

**Meeting Dates:** 1/26, 1/30

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Changes list of activities for school district grants awarded from the School Improvement Fund. Directs the Department of Education to establish monetary rewards for schools districts and programs that show extraordinary progress toward student achievement goals. Declares an emergency; effective July 1, 2007.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Whether there should be a geographic distribution requirement
- Equity of the 25% matching requirement
- Sustainability of grants
- Flexibility of grant activities

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** Retains the intent statement linking the School Improvement Fund to Quality Education Commission recommendations. Specifies that School Improvement Funds may be used for monetary rewards program. Removes requirement for applying school districts to fund 25 percent or more of grant activities.

**BACKGROUND:** The School Improvement Fund was established in 2001 and funded for one year. The Fund was instituted as a grant program targeted toward increased student achievement and administered by the Department of Education. This bill came out of the Senate Commission on Education Excellence that convened during the 2005 Interim. They made several recommendations, one of which was to modify the School Improvement Fund to target investments toward high-priority areas and programs that have shown results. The Commission also recommended that grant implementation be evaluated and performance measures be established to track progress toward stated education goals. The grants in the bill are known as "Accountability Block Grants".