

SB 1539 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

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Meeting Dates: 2/16

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes a pilot program to award grants to certain school districts to be used to provide direct assistance and supports to homeless students of the school districts, including transportation services, for purposes of increasing access to schools and improving academic achievement. Directs the Oregon Department of Education to award grants to school districts participating in the pilot program using money in the Statewide Education Initiatives Account. Prescribes grants distribution formula. Starts the pilot program on July 1, 2022 and sunsets the program on July 1, 2025. Directs the department to submit a specified report on the education of homeless students, including the pilot program, to interim committees of the Legislative Assembly related to education, by September 15, 2025. Takes effect on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) states that the McKinney-Vento Act's Education of Homeless Children and Youth Program ensures that homeless children and youth are provided a free, appropriate public education, despite lack of a fixed place of residence or a supervising parent or guardian. ORS 339.115(7) is the state public school admission statute assuring the right of homeless and other children and youth in similar circumstances to enroll in schools. (Source: [Oregon Department of Education : McKinney-Vento Act: Homeless Education Program : McKinney-Vento Act : State of Oregon](#))

SB 1539 establishes a pilot program to award grants to certain school districts to be used to provide direct assistance and supports to homeless students of the school districts. The bill directs the ODE to select seven school districts to participate in the pilot program. Any school district may apply to participate in the program, but the bill also lists the characteristics of suitable school districts for the program.