

**Department of Public Instruction**

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Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead
State Superintendent

To: Education Funding and Taxation Committee

From: Robert V. Marthaller, Assistant Superintendent
Lucy Fredericks, Director, Indian Education

Date: October 18, 2012

Re: HB 1049 – Study of Indian Education Issues

Section 1 of HB 1049 directs the superintendent of public instruction to conduct a study of Indian education issues and to develop criteria for grants to low-performing schools.

The Department partnered with Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel) to conduct a review of studies on the education of Indian students, specifically research on factors that influence Indian student achievement. Though few rigorous studies have been conducted with Indian students, the general findings of the available research indicate that parent, family and community involvement, alternative instructional techniques, culturally responsive education, nurturing self-esteem and language needs of students are key factors in improving academic achievement for Indian students. An underlying theme of the research suggests that another key factor to advance student achievement is the need to involve tribal leaders and Native community elders and to develop partnerships with tribal leaderships and public school educators, state agencies, health and social service providers.

Department staff reported these findings on several occasions to the Tribal and State Relations Committee. On October 8, 2012 the Committee considered a bill draft with criteria to provide funding for grants to low-performing schools. The bill draft 13.0205.01000 was unanimously approved by the Committee and will move the bill forward for consideration during the Sixty-third Legislative Assembly. The bill requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to develop and implement a competitive pilot grant program to aid integrated community services that support identified at-risk American Indian students and their families and support collaboration among community-based services. The purpose is to develop and adopt a school-level and community-level plan for envelopment of local supports for identified at-risk students and the overall improvement of a school's and community's capacity to deliver and sustain this effort.

An appropriation of \$500,000 is requested for purposes of awarding a grant.