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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 569

Offered January 12, 2011

Prefiled January 7, 2011

Establishing a joint subcommittee to study feasibility and efficacy of a uniform statewide grading policy in the Commonwealth. Report.

Patron—Ward

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, currently, each local school division in the Commonwealth develops and implements its own grading scale; and

WHEREAS, with more and more high school graduates continuing on to higher education, the ever more competitive admissions process has focused greater attention on the discrepancies among the various grading policies; and

WHEREAS, other states have begun to examine the idea of a statewide uniform grading policy for kindergarten through grade 12, including South Carolina, which has adopted a statewide uniform grading policy; and

WHEREAS, a statewide uniform grading policy may potentially level the playing field in the college admissions process; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That a joint subcommittee be established to study the feasibility and efficacy of a uniform statewide grading policy in the Commonwealth. The joint subcommittee shall have a total membership of five legislative members. Members shall be appointed as follows: three members of the House of Delegates to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates and two members of the Senate to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules. The joint subcommittee shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership.

In conducting its study, the joint subcommittee shall (i) examine other states' uniform grading policies and the effect on the public school systems in those states, (ii) consider the implication of implementing a similar policy in the Commonwealth, and (iii) if such a policy is found to be desirable, consider and make recommendations on specific elements of such a policy, including consistent numerical breaks for letter grades, standards to define honors courses, a methodology for appropriately weighting advanced and honors courses, and a determination of courses and weightings to be used in the calculation of class rank.

Administrative staff support shall be provided by the Office of the Clerk of the House of Delegates. Legal, research, policy analysis, and other services as requested by the joint subcommittee shall be provided by the Division of Legislative Services. Technical assistance shall be provided by the Department of Education. All agencies of the Commonwealth shall provide assistance to the joint subcommittee for this study, upon request.

The joint subcommittee shall be limited to four meetings for the 2011 interim, and the direct costs of this study shall not exceed \$5,000 without approval as set out in this resolution. Approval for unbudgeted nonmember-related expenses shall require the written authorization of the chairman of the joint subcommittee and the respective Clerk. If a companion joint resolution of the other chamber is agreed to, written authorization of both Clerks shall be required.

No recommendation of the joint subcommittee shall be adopted if a majority of the House members or a majority of the Senate members appointed to the joint subcommittee (i) vote against the recommendation and (ii) vote for the recommendation to fail notwithstanding the majority vote of the joint subcommittee.

The joint subcommittee shall complete its meetings by November 30, 2011, and the chairman shall submit to the Division of Legislative Automated Systems an executive summary of its findings and recommendations no later than the first day of the 2012 Regular Session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall state whether the joint subcommittee intends to submit to the General Assembly and the Governor a report of its findings and recommendations for publication as a House or Senate document. The executive summary and the report shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

Implementation of this resolution is subject to subsequent approval and certification by the Joint Rules Committee. The Committee may approve or disapprove expenditures for this study, extend or

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59 delay the period for the conduct of the study, or authorize additional meetings during the 2011 interim.