



**Ninety-Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2001
Committee Statement
LB 740**

Hearing Date: 3/13/01
Committee On: Education

Introducers: (Landis, Price)
Title: Adopt the School Violence Prevention Act

Roll Call Vote – Final Committee Action:

- X Advanced to General File
 - Advanced to General File with Amendments
 - Indefinitely Postponed
-

Vote Results:

6	Yes	Senators Brashear, Coordsen, Maxwell, Price, Raikes, Suttle
1	No	Senator Stuhr
0	Present, not voting	
1	Absent	Senator Wickersham

Proponents:

Senator David Landis
Virgil Horne
Paul Ladehoff
Atricia Lenagy
Louis LaRose
Doris Burns
Daphne Petersen

Debora Brownyard
Tom McBride

WRITTEN:

Nebraska Association of School Boards
Children and Family Coalition

Representing:

Introducer
Lincoln Public Schools
Nebraska Mediation Center, Program Director
Educational Service Units
Nebraska Justice Center
American Society of Safety Engineers
Nebraska Chapter National Association of Social Workers
Nebraska Justice Center
Epworth Village

Opponents:

Representing:

Neutral:

Representing:

Summary of purpose and/or changes:

Legislative Bill 740 creates the School Violence Prevention Act to provide grants to E.S.U.'s and school districts for conflict management programs.

An intent is stated to establish a demonstration grant program to enhance conflict management and dispute resolution skills of students and teachers. The intent is explained by stating that conflict occurs daily in life and is not necessarily good or bad. The explanation continues by stating that it is the way that conflict is handled that can create a good learning experience or can lead to violence. The language also states that school districts often lack a comprehensive approach to teaching conflict management skills, but the expertise exists within the Department of Education, E.S.U.'s, and mediation centers to assist districts with the assessment, evaluation, and training. Conflict management and dispute resolution skills that empower students to take responsibility for their own conflicts would be the focus of the School Violence Prevention Program.

The department would establish the School Violence Prevention Program, which would be a competitive, demonstration grant program to assist school districts with the development, funding, implementation, maintenance, and evaluation of comprehensive conflict management programs. Conflict management would mean any process that assists with resolving a dispute without litigation, prosecution, serious disruption of the school environment, or violence.

The grants would be awarded to E.S.U.'s or school districts based on criteria established by the department and an intent is stated for the grants to be geographically dispersed.

Applications from an E.S.U. would include documentation which demonstrates:
Collaboration with a mediation center;
Participation by at least 3 school districts in the service area; and
Reasons why such school districts are in need of comprehensive conflict management programs.

Applications from a school district would include documentation which demonstrates:
Collaboration with the local E.S.U.;
Collaboration with a mediation center; and
Evidence of a conflict management program plan.

School districts receiving grants would annually:
Collect data on the incidence of conflict and the district's capacity to handle conflict;
Evaluate the district's capacity to handle conflict; and
Revise the district's conflict management program plan accordingly.

An intent is stated for \$250,000 to be appropriated to the department each year for 2001-02 through 2005-06 to carry out the purposes of the Act. An intent is also to for the department to have the capacity to manage the program be appropriately supported.

Up to 50% of the appropriation in any year could be used for pre-implementation activities, including:

1. Consulting with the school safety and security committee;
2. Developing assessment and evaluation instruments;
3. Providing inservice training for teachers and staff;

4. Assisting in preparation and implementation of the conflict management program plan;
5. Developing and assessing materials and resources;
6. Providing parent education and training;
7. Providing education sessions for school board members, community organizations, or others who may be involved with the program; or
8. Performing any activity that builds the capacity to develop, fund, implement, maintain, or evaluate a conflict management program or plan.

E.S.U.'s or school districts would be able to contract with mediation centers or others to carry out the purposes of the Act. Mediation center would mean an approved center as defined in § 25-2903.

The department would submit a report on activities under the Act to the Governor and the Clerk of the Legislature on or before each January 1st.

The department may adopt rules and regulations to carry out the purposes of the Act.

Explanation of amendments, if any:

Senator Ron Raikes, Chairperson