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As of: July 29, 2016 (9:05am)

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**** Joint Resolution No. ****

Introduced By *****

By Request of the *****

A Joint Resolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the State of Montana requesting an interim study of the needs and costs of programs to provide for students with special needs; and requiring that the final results of the study be reported to the 66th Legislature.

WHEREAS, the 2015-2016 School Funding Interim Commission examined several issues related to the costs of educational programs to provide for students with special needs as defined in 20-9-309 and determined that these issues warrant further study.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislative Council be requested to designate an appropriate interim committee, pursuant to section 5-5-217, MCA, or direct sufficient staff resources to study the needs and costs for programs to provide for students with special needs, as defined in 20-9-309, such as:

- (1) children with disabilities, as defined in 20-7-401;
- (2) at-risk students, as defined in 20-1-101;
- (3) students with limited English proficiency;
- (4) children who are qualified for services under 29 U.S.C.

794; and

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(5) gifted and talented children, as defined in 20-7-901.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the study:

(1) review existing studies of funding special education in Montana and their conclusions and recommendations;

(2) review best practices for programs serving students with special needs;

(3) review the current funding mechanisms for programs serving students with special needs;

(4) examine recent expenditure patterns for programs serving students with special needs;

(5) review current programs utilized by Montana schools to serve students with special needs;

(6) investigate alternative funding mechanisms for programs serving students with special needs, including mechanisms used by other states;

(7) consider whether alternative funding mechanisms provide a better match between funding levels for special education and actual costs of the mandated services;

(8) consider whether alternative funding mechanisms would prevent tendencies to over-identify special education students or elevate levels of service beyond the areas of need in order to receive more funding;

(9) consider whether alternative funding mechanisms would enhance the development of the full educational potential or the equality of educational opportunity for students with special needs; and

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(10) examine any other aspect related to the educational needs of students with special needs as determined by the assigned committee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that all aspects of the study, including presentation and review requirements, be concluded prior to September 15, 2018.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the final results of the study, including any findings, conclusions, comments, or recommendations of the appropriate committee, be reported to the 66th Legislature.

- END -

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