

## Senate Education Committee

*Kat Bourque 271-3091*

HB 216, relative to educational assignments for pupils who have been suspended.

Hearing Date: March 21, 2017

Time Opened: 9:25 a.m.

Time Closed: 9:34 a.m.

**Members of the Committee Present:** Senators Reagan, Giuda, Ward, Watters and Kahn

**Members of the Committee Absent :** None

**Bill Analysis :** This bill provides that no pupil in kindergarten through grade 2 shall be expelled from a public school. The bill also establishes circumstances under which a pupil in kindergarten through grade 2 may be suspended.

**Sponsors :**

Rep. Ladd  
Rep. Shaw

Rep. Myler  
Sen. Watters

Rep. Grenier

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**Who supports the bill:** Rep. Ladd, Senator Watters, Barrett Christina (NHSBA)

**Who opposes the bill:** No one

**Who is neutral on the bill:** No one

**Summary of testimony presented in support :**

*Rep. Ladd*

*Prime Sponsor*

- This bill requires a school to make educational assignments available to the suspended pupil during the period of suspension.
- A recent study committee formed by HB 1145 (2016) showed that expelling a child in grades K-3 is extremely rare.
- Suspension, as a tool, is necessary for extreme offenses, such as those including weapons.
- Current law states that if a suspension is to last more than ten days, a formal hearing is necessary this legislation requires that the work assignments from school be made available to students so that when they return to school, they have been given an opportunity to continue their work.
- This bill passed the House Education Committee on the consent calendar unanimously.
- Although most school districts are likely taking part in this now, there are some who are not. This legislation has been adopted in many other states.

- There will be further study under the above-mentioned study committee on the impact of school suspensions.
- Senator Watters asked if Representative Ladd would agree that it is surprising that some schools do not provide assignments to suspended students. Representative Ladd agreed and believes that this should be made available.
- Senator Giuda asked why suspension occurs if a student's home environment is often poor, and if it is not, why staying home is a punishment for a child. Representative Ladd stated that some students come into school and are violent towards other students. The majority of students are at school to learn and protecting these students is very important. This gives the school and parents time to find a solution. Suspension is difficult and more study is needed.

**Summary of testimony presented in opposition :** N/A

**Neutral Information Presented:** N/A

**Future Action:** Ought to Pass

KAB

Date Hearing Report completed: March 21, 2017