

HB 2338 -- Persistence to Graduation Fund

Sponsor: Holsman

This bill creates the Persistence to Graduation Fund, which will be used for renewable grants of up to five years to implement dropout prevention strategies. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is required to establish a procedure for applying for the grants. School districts must meet specified criteria to qualify for a grant including having a lower graduation rate than indicated on their latest annual performance review, not having full accreditation, or having their latest annual performance review score consistent with an unaccredited or provisionally accredited classification. The department must give preference to districts proposing a holistic approach as specified in the bill and must have rules for fund allocation and the means of judging grant effectiveness established by January 15, 2009. The department may stop payments on 30 days' notice to a district if it determines that the district is misusing funds or if the district's program is deemed ineffectual. The department must report annually to the Governor and General Assembly by January 15 on the recipients, amount of grants, and graduation data for the preceding five-year period. The General Assembly must annually appropriate a minimum of \$5 million each fiscal year for the program. Any moneys in the fund at the end of the biennium will revert to the General Revenue Fund.

The provisions of the bill will expire six years from the effective date.