

**2015 HOUSE EDUCATION**

**HB 1362**

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Education Committee**  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1362  
1/28/2015  
22699

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature

*Donna Whetham*

## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

To provide an appropriation for continuum-based English language learner grants to school districts

Attachment # 1.

## Minutes:

**Chairman Nathe:** opened the hearing on HB 1362.

**Representative Kris Wallman:** District 11, introduced HB 1362. (See Attachment #1) (1:15- 4:13).

**Rep. Ben Koppelman:** Are you aware in the current funding bill in the Senate right now? I think a lot of the things that you have asked for are in that bill and is this bill applicative or not?

**Representative Wallman:** Yes, After the Picus report came out it was recommended that the waiting factors for special ed and ELL children would change and that there would be an increased waiting factor for those kids. One of the issues was that level 3 went away and to offset that there was additional dollars that was added to at risk students. What is unique about this bill and is not duplicated is it specifically it is an adult literacy program combined with early childhood education. So families can attend together.

The adult literacy piece is so compelling because if we provide ELL services or support to the kids once they get to public school they are so far behind if the family does not speak English. If we put a small investment early on they come to us so much prepared.

**Chairman Nathe:** In the K-12 bill in the Senate it has an increase of \$20 million dollars in ELL funding. Where it is in the Senate I am not sure. So the factor was increased many times.

**Rep Ben Koppelman:** I got the impression this bill is directed at the ELL students, can this money be used for adult learning?

**Representative Wallman:** The bill is for grants for family members that would be parents and guardians. North Dakota is recipient of unaccompanied minors and so there is sometimes guardians. Those services would include adults.

**Rep Rohr:** We are talking about children in this bill but we are including adults because, isn't the adult literacy program covered by the organization or sponsoring group that brought the individuals to the area?

**Representative Wallman:** The fact is there are families that need to learn English. Fargo is designated as a refugee resettlement community as is Grand Forks.

**Vice Chairman Schatz:** Do they contribute any funds to refugee families to learn the English language?

**Representative Wallman:** They offer classes at Lutheran Social Services and there are other organizations that help but it is scattered and mostly volunteer programs.

**Rep. Schreiber Beck:** Do any other communities have anything in place for grant dollars programs?

**Representative Wallman:** There are no other programs in place. This program is a public - private partnership. United Way has collected data on the success of this program. At one point there were federal dollars and it was so successful when the federal dollars went away we went out and sought out other stakeholders to contribute. Bismarck is really struggling with this issue. The school district asked if we could help so they could put together a program of a public - private partnership. Then the parents can learn English and participate more easily in the workforce and the community.

**Chairman Nathe:** Even start family literacy, are they mainly funded by United Way?

**Representative Wallman:** No, I passed out testimony from United Way.(See Attachment #1 page 2).

**Rep. Kelsh:** Is it true the sponsors who bring these refugees here help them for a while and then leave them on their own. They don't get involved in their education much is that true?

**Representative Wallman:** That is true, to the best of my knowledge.

**Rep. Meier:** What country is the biggest bulk of refugees coming from?

**Representative Wallman:** India, it changes from year to year. This year it is Butan, Western India. Explained testimony. (See attachment #1) (13:55-17:46).

**Chairman Nathe:** Any other support for HB 1362. Seeing none. Any opposition to HB 1362? None. Closed the hearing on HB 1362.

# 2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Education Committee  
Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1362

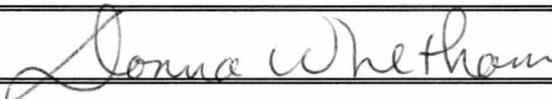
2/3/2015

23096

Subcommittee

Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

To provide an appropriation for continuum-based English language learner grants to school districts.

Attachment #

## Minutes:

**Chairman Nathe:** opened the hearing on HB 1362. This bill is an appropriation of \$450,000 dollars for ELL for districts and for including adult literacy programs.

**Rep. Rohr: Moved Do Not Pass on HB 1362.** There is a lot of programs out there already and it is part of the school funding formula and it might be an expansion of DPI's role.

**Rep. Looyesen: Seconded**

**Rep. Schreiber Beck:** I concur with Rep. Rohr, I don't feel it is wise use of government money if the programs are not set up.

**Chairman Nathe:** Yes I agree, we've increased money for ELL in the K-12 formula which we will see after crossover. Her intentions are good and it seems to be focused on one part of the state and makes me a little uncomfortable with it.

**Rep. Olson:** I spoke with West Fargo school and their budget for English language learners is almost \$2.5 million dollars. They already get other grants. The placing agencies that bring the refugees, I was told, do not contribute as far as teaching them. They do not provide any support. They expect the state to take care of it.

**Rep. Koppelman:** One of the concerns, it is the fact that adult , parents and parenting education and we are asking DPI to be in charge of this, when DPI 's mission is for the students until their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. If we want to get to the parent side of this we might need to require the sponsoring agencies to take care of this. I will support the motion.

**Rep. Kelsh:** I think there is some merit to this that the parents need to learn English to.

**A Roll Call Vote was taken. Yes: 11 No: 2 Absent: 0. Motion carried.**

**Rep. Looyen: will carry the bill.**

Date: 2/3/15  
 Roll Call Vote #: 1

**2015 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
 ROLL CALL VOTES  
 BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 1362**

House Education Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

- Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar  
 Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Rep Rohr Seconded By Rep Looyzen

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Nathe	✓		Rep. Hunskor	✓	
Vice Chairman Schatz	✓		Rep. Kelsh		✓
Rep. Dennis Johnson	✓		Rep. Mock		✓
Rep. B. Koppelman	✓				
Rep. Looyzen	✓				
Rep. Meier	✓				
Rep. Olson	✓				
Rep. Rohr	✓				
Rep. Schreiber Beck	✓				
Rep. Zubke	✓				

Total (Yes) 11 No 2

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Rep Looyzen

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1362: Education Committee (Rep. Nathe, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS**  
(11 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1362 was placed on the  
Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2015 TESTIMONY**

**HB 1362**

#1 HB 1362  
1/28/15

**Testimony--HB 1362**

Representative Kris Wallman

District 11, Fargo

January 28, 2015

It's seldom effective to throw money at a situation and hope it somehow gets fixed—the devil is always in the details when it comes to good policy. That's why I'm sharing the details of a unique and successful project that helps our newest Americans succeed in North Dakota. This bill would help to bring this project to other impacted areas.

Even Start Family Literacy is a project that integrates **adult education for parents** with age-appropriate, quality **early education for young children**. Even Start Family Literacy is a unique, one-of-a-kind project in North Dakota because **families attend together in one unified program**.

This bill is for a small pool of grant dollars that would be made available to the school districts across the state (they include: Minot, Grand Forks, Fargo, West Fargo, and Bismarck) with the highest number of English Language Learners.

In Fargo, Even Start Family Literacy is offered through a combination of funding sources including funding from local school district dollars, grant dollars from the United Way, and through Reading Corp.

Even Start Family Literacy is a successful private-public partnership that leverages investments from several community stakeholders. If this bill passes and a small pool of grant dollars is made available by the state, the private grant dollars would continue to be available for the Even Start Family Literacy project. **State dollars would not replace investments from other stakeholders.**

This project supports North Dakota's economy by preparing newcomers to help meet our workforce needs, by preparing young children for the demands of school, and by integrating and engaging our newest citizens. I humbly ask for your support.



January 29, 2015

United Way of Cass-Clay has made long standing investments in the area of early childhood education. As a private, local nonprofit organization, United Way recognizes the importance of providing high quality early educational opportunities for children and families. National, state and local research supports the idea that investments made early a child's and family's life will provide long term economic returns on investment for a community. University of Chicago School of Economics professor and Nobel Laureate James Heckman finds that the highest return on investment to our community comes from investing in quality programs targeted at the earliest years of a child's life. His research demonstrates that targeted investments in quality programming can yield as much as a \$17:1 return on investment (ROI).

Fargo and West Fargo have the highest number of English Language Learners (ELL) students in the state. This fact contributes to a culturally rich community; it also provides challenges in providing quality early education to children and families who are new arrivals to our county. Families face many barriers when first arriving: language, housing, transportation, adjusting to cultural norms (such as the banking industry, paying bills via bank account) to name just a few. One very large, yet often unattended to area is the education of their young children. Families must first attend to their basic needs before focusing on an educational system that is very unfamiliar and often scary for them to navigate.

Locally, United Way of Cass-Clay, in partnership with Fargo Public Schools, has been investing in the Even Start Family Literacy Program since 2012. This comprehensive family literacy program assists families in poverty meet the educational needs of both the adults and their young children in order to reduce academic disparities and give these children an "Even Start" as they enter school. This program provides early childhood education and parent/guardian education to all enrolled families along with their adult education. The Even Start Family Literacy Program provides family literacy services to low income families with an educational need. Even Start educates and supports the family as a whole. Parents, Infants and young children come to school together. As a four component Family Literacy Program, Even Start integrates early childhood education, adult literacy and ESL instruction and interactive parent child activities into a unified program. *This program is the only program which serves the educational needs of two generations.*

Outcome data from participants demonstrates that:

30.8% achieved growth in 3 of the 5 measures pre-academic literacy measures.

*-While 30% may not seem like a high success rate, note that many of the children were not able to even read one word of English when beginning the program and were not even able to take the test*

95% children assessed with the Ages & Stages Questionnaire are demonstrating appropriate growth.

*-This is an important indicator because it measures whether children are developing appropriately, socially and emotionally. Social and emotional readiness is a crucial component to children being ready for Kindergarten*

Currently, United Way of Cass-Clay provides a \$50,000 annual grant to support staff positions at the Even Start program. United Way of Cass-Clay is proud to partner with Fargo Public Schools and will fund the program through 2016 as guaranteed by the current grant agreement. We anticipate that Even Start will reapply for funding in 2016 for funding in 2017-2019 and be highly competitive in that grant review process.

Even Start Family Literacy program is unique-not only in Fargo, but unique to the state of North Dakota. United Way of Cass-Clay leadership recognizes that families newly arrived to this county face unique and complex issues in acculturation to our society. By providing these families an "even start" we are ensuring that we are investing in today's workforce by educating parents, but simultaneously making long-term economic investments by providing high quality early educational opportunities to their young children.

Respectfully,

  
Thomas Hill  
Community Impact Director



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Jennifer Frueh  
Coordinator

Fargo Adult Learning Center  
Even Start Family Literacy

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1/27/2015

The Even Start Family Literacy is a unique program serving both children and parents as they strive to reach their educational goals. This program integrates early childhood education with high school, Adult Basic Ed., G.E.D and English language classes. Additionally, families are supported through Parenting classes, interactive literacy activities and home visits to create a single, unified educational program.

Our New American families face many barriers as they adjust to life in their resettled community. Their goal as parents is to provide their children with a solid foundation for their future. Difficulties with language, employment and navigating a new culture do not diminish their parenting goal, but add an extra challenge.

During the school year, we serve children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. We extend services to early elementary aged children for the 6 week summer school session. There are two classrooms, each staffed with a teacher and two paraprofessionals. The early childhood classes are designed to assist children in reaching their full potential and enter school ready for kindergarten. To accomplish this goal, we collaborate with Reading Corp and implement curriculum that aligns with the Fargo Public Schools.

A key component to the success of the program is that it integrates education for the parents as well as the children. They are not stand alone programs and no child comes to the Family Literacy program without a parent. In our English language classes, curriculum is designed to help the student achieve academic, citizenship and employment skills. Students are also able to participate in Driver's Literacy, Citizenship and Pre C.N.A classes. Additionally, students are able to work towards their high school diploma with collaboration of Woodrow Wilson High School or earn their G.E.D.

Our program is funded by Fargo Public Schools and the United Way of Cass-Clay. The current budget is \$235,000. With the increased financial support, we have been able to serve more families than ever before. Last year at this time, the Family Literacy program served 32 families, comprised of 80 individuals, both parents and children. This year at the same semester break, we have served 56 families and 138 individuals, and we still have the second semester. The additional funds have allowed us to serve more families, but there are still 109 children on the waiting list.

Thank you for your consideration to fund additional programs, like ours, that benefit both the students and our communities.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Frueh, Coordinator

Testimony for HB 1362

Prepared by Dr. Kevin Brooks

Professor of English, North Dakota State University

January 27, 2015

Speaking from my position of expertise as a professor of English at North Dakota State University since 1997, and as a Bush Foundation Fellow (2013-2015) researching and supporting adult English language learner education in Fargo and West Fargo, I would like to offer strong support of HB 1362.

The need to adequately fund ELL programming in K-12 settings is a federally mandated requirement, so I will not offer testimony in support of that initiative. Point 3 in Section 1 of HB 1362, however, is perhaps less obvious and not federally mandated, therefore perhaps in need of some support. Investing in pre-K education for children in English language learning families while simultaneously investing in adult education for parents at various stages of learning English, is a fantastic investment for North Dakota.

The best scholarship on the social and economic role of English language learning in resettlement has been conducted by Professor Morton Beiser of Ryerson University. Beiser conducted a 10-year longitudinal study of southeast Asian refugees in the Vancouver area of British Columbia, Canada, and he found that ELL opportunities there did not always serve the people who make the best use of that education: women and the elderly. Women and the elderly often found themselves at home providing childcare, but when they were given the opportunities to learn, they stuck with their education longer than men, they showed more gains, and greater English proficiency at the end of their schooling. Funding and making pre-K education available to ELL children is the best way to support and encourage adult education among women and the elderly. The evidence supporting the value of pre-K education is now overwhelmingly clear, and supporting pre-K education for ELL families while simultaneously providing ELL instruction for parents—but especially mothers and the elderly—is precisely the investment North Dakota should be making. If the children and parents are in EvenStart, and if parents have the opportunity to attend class additional classes while the children are in a stimulating educational environment, everybody gains with a relatively small educational investment. The pairing of EvenStart and Adult ELL in Fargo is the perfect programmatic pairing, and Jennifer Frueh, Director of EvenStart and Adult Education in Fargo, can make the case for her programs' specific needs.

Making adult ELL available and inviting (i.e. high quality, good facilities, relevant times and places) to learners throughout their lives is very important. In a place like North Dakota, individuals can come and find entry level positions without strong English skills. But if the economy slows, if individuals can no longer work due to injuries or family commitments or other factors, they run the risk of getting stuck in their station in life, are more likely to develop depressive symptoms, and are more likely to cost the state money or problems. This pattern of early success, followed by a slump, and mixed results getting out of the slump because of limited English skills, emerged clearly in Beiser's 10 year study. Ensuring adult ELL learners have access to classes throughout their lives will increase the likelihood that they will integrate successfully, both socially and economically. Just this morning, I worked with a smart, capable woman originally from Burkano Faso. She has been in the US eighteen years, but Minot and now Fargo just the last two years after sixteen years in Maryland. She told me that her husband came for work in Minot, they are making more money than they have ever made during their time in the US, they have bought a house in South Fargo, and their daughter is an A student at Davies High, planning to attend NDSU this fall. This woman's spoken English is excellent, but because she did not have an opportunity to attend school in her home

country, she is not as strong a reader and writer as she would like to be. Funding and expanding adult ELL education throughout the state will ensure that my new friend, and many others like her, will feel welcome in North Dakota, will succeed in North Dakota, and will contribute to the vibrancy of the state in the 21st Century.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Brooks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Kevin Brooks, PhD.