



Hundredth Legislature - First Session - 2007  
**Introducer's Statement of Intent**  
**LB 316**

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**Chairperson: Ron Raikes**  
**Committee: Education**  
**Date of Hearing: February 13, 2007**

The following constitute the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

This legislation proposes the creation of a Special Education Services Task Force for the purpose of doing a systematic and comprehensive review of the manner in which special education services are provided and financed in Nebraska with a view toward making recommendations for legislative and policy changes by the end of 2007.

Chaired by the Chair of the Legislature's Education Committee, the task force would consist of individuals representing a broad spectrum of groups with an interest in special education services, including parents with children receiving special education services from the complete range of school districts (and in private settings), educational service unit administrators and special education teachers, a public school teacher, a special education director from a public school, a school board member, a representative of a child advocacy organization, a State Department of Education expert on special education, a representative of the Department of Health and Human Services responsible for the placement of state wards, a representative of a private provider of special education services, and a representative of postsecondary special education.

The Task Force would be created and would begin work prior to June 15, 2007, with the Legislature's Executive Board choosing two members (one senator from the Education Committee and one senator not a member). All other members would be chosen by the Governor.

The Legislature's Education Committee and the Fiscal Analyst's Office as well as the Department of Education would provide staff support.

The examination undertaken by the Task Force is to be broad and far-reaching, including the application of the "least restrictive environment" doctrine, the availability of services across the state, the use of private providers of special education services by the public schools and private individuals, and the finances of special education, both here and in other states. The final report of the Task Force would be due by December 31, 2007.

This Task Force would be the first major effort to assess the changes in special education both in practice and in financial support during the turbulent decade since the last study was undertaken by the Special Education Accountability Commission in 1994-95. This study is needed to determine where we stand now and where we need to go to see that the parents and students who rely on these programs are fairly and equitably served.

**Principal Introducer:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Senator Mike Friend**