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(S.D.)-Legislature Advances Preschool Computer Proposal

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/19/2013 08:43 AM

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) - A proposal to pilot a home-based preschool program for low-income families has won approval from a legislative panel over opposition from education lobbyists.

The proposal, by Rapid City Republican Rep. Jacqueline Sly, puts computers and software in the homes of 4- and 5-year-olds of low-income families. Parents must promise their children will spend at least 15 minutes a day working on programs that cover primarily reading, with some math and science.

Sly based her proposal on a Utah program that costs about \$1,500 per child annually.

The South Dakota Head Start Association opposed the proposal. Executive Director Kathy Cruse says she applauds efforts to teach youngsters, but she's against the concept of children learning alone on computers through rote academic exercises.