

FISCAL ESTIMATE FORM

1999 Session

- ORIGINAL UPDATED
 CORRECTED SUPPLEMENTAL

LRB # -2322/1

Introduction # AB 212

Admin. Rule #

Subject

Elimination of requirement for 7th and 8th grade foreign language instruction.

Fiscal Effect

State: No State Fiscal Effect

Check columns below only if bill makes a direct appropriation or affects a sum sufficient appropriation.

- Increase Existing Appropriation Increase Existing Revenues
 Decrease Existing Appropriation Decrease Existing Revenues
 Create New Appropriation

Increase Costs - May be possible to Absorb Within Agency's Budget Yes No

Decrease Costs

Local: No local government costs

1. Increase Costs
 Permissive Mandatory
 2. Decrease Costs
 Permissive Mandatory

3. Increase Revenues
 Permissive Mandatory
 4. Decrease Revenues
 Permissive Mandatory

5. Types of Local Governmental Units Affected:
 Towns Villages Cities
 Counties Others _____
 School Districts WTCS Districts

Fund Sources Affected

- GPR FED PRO PRS SEG

SEG-S

Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate:

Current law requires each school board to provide regular instruction in foreign language in grades 7 and 8. The requirement took effect in the 1996-1997 school year. This bill eliminates the requirement.

An April 1999 analysis based on the 1997-1998 curriculum reports showed that there were 56 districts not reporting any 7th and 8th grade foreign language instruction (excluding UHS districts), nor did they list a language teacher at the middle school or junior high level. 23 other districts reported no enrollment, but listed foreign language teachers based in middle schools.

The department has worked with districts to help them meet the requirements. The department has not granted any permanent waivers, but has granted some districts more time to create plans to meet the requirements, especially in cases in which the district had planned program or building changes (e.g., building a new middle school or designing a grade 6-12 curriculum).

It is not known what effect the repeal of the requirement might have on districts that have programs in place. Some districts that are facing constraints from revenue limits and declining enrollments might consider eliminating their 7th and 8th grade foreign language requirements.

For the 56 districts not reporting any instruction (even though the requirement has been in place since 1996-1997), the bill might avert additional spending, assuming the districts are not offering the programming. For purposes of this fiscal estimate, the analysis assumes that these 56 districts would have to hire additional staff to meet the requirements.

The department estimates that these 56 districts would have to hire an additional 14.4 FTE to provide foreign language instruction in grades 7 and 8. (The department assumes an average of 25 students per class, with each student receiving 9 weeks of daily instruction. With five class periods per day, each teacher could provide instruction to 125 students per quarter or 500 students per year.)

(continued)

Long-Range Fiscal Implications:

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The Wisconsin Taxpayers Alliance estimates that the average teacher salary and fringe benefits in Wisconsin in 1997-1998 were \$56,135 (\$41,907 in salary; \$14,228 in fringe benefits). Using those figures, the expected cost to districts for additional staff to meet the requirement is \$808,344 ($\$56,135 \times 14.40$ FTE). Additionally, the department estimates that each district might require a one-time expenditure of \$2,000 in instructional materials for the foreign language requirement. Most 9-week middle school language courses are not textbook-based. Total one-time costs for materials: \$112,000 ($\$2,000 \times 56$).

This bill could result in cost savings to the 56 districts of \$808,344 annually for additional staff and \$112,000 one-time savings for additional materials. Additional savings could result from districts that decide to drop foreign language instruction if the requirement is repealed.