

Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DPI 4/25/2009

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| LRB Number | 09-1741/1 | Introduction Number | SB-154 | Estimate Type | Original |
| Description School safety plans, pupil records, and school bullying | | | | | |

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

This bill prepared for the Joint Legislative Council's Special Committee on School Safety and includes three components: 1) school safety, 2) school bullying, and 3) pupil records.

School safety:

State: The bill does not specify school safety requirements that must be established by the department. However, it is assumed that school boards will look to the department for guidance on how to meet the new school district requirements specified in statute. The department already provides a series of webcasts relating to school crisis preparedness and safe schools. Therefore, it is assumed that there will be no fiscal cost to the department in providing the needed technical assistance.

Local: The bill expands current statutory requirements for public schools by providing specific details regarding school safety plans. The bill requires both public and private schools to do all of the following:

1. Create a school safety plan with active participation from appropriate parties such as local law enforcement officers, fire fighters, school administrators, teachers, pupil service professionals, and mental health professionals.
2. Specify the process for reviewing the plan.
3. Include general guidelines specifying procedures for emergency prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery as well as methods for conducting drills required to comply with the plan.
4. Determine who shall receive the school safety plan training, which is based upon the school district's prioritized needs, risks and vulnerabilities.
5. Drill school safety plan procedures twice a year or substitute a school safety drill for a fire, tornado, or other hazard drill.
6. Have the school safety plan in place within 3 years after this bill goes into effect and review it at least once every 3 years following implementation.

Public school districts must have a school safety plan in place under current law. However, it is unknown how many meet the requirements specified above. Therefore, implementation costs will vary from district to district and are indeterminate.

School bullying:

State: The bill requires the department, by 2010, to develop a model school policy on bullying by pupils. The policy must include specified information and be posted on the department's web site. The department already has Bullying Prevention Policy Guidelines posted on its web site that include most of the information required in the bill. It is assumed that any additional costs associated with updating these guidelines will be absorbed by the department.

Local: The bill requires each school board (including a first-class city school board), by August 15, 2010, to adopt a policy prohibiting bullying by pupils. The school board may adopt the department's policy. If a school board develops its own policy, it will have costs associated with establishing and adopting a new policy. It is assumed that most school boards will adopt the department's policy. Therefore, any fiscal cost to a school district regarding this provision should be minimal.

The bill requires the school board to provide a copy of the policy to any person who requests it and annually

distribute the policy to all pupils enrolled in the school district and their parents and guardians.

All school boards will have costs associated with printing the bullying policy and mailing or distributing it to pupils and parents. Costs will vary among school districts depending on whether districts create their own policy or adopt the department's model policy, the volume of printing, and the method of distributing the policy. In addition, some school districts already provide bullying policy information to pupils and parents. The number of school districts that provide such information is not known. The local fiscal effect of this provision is indeterminate.

The bill designates Wednesday of the fourth week in September as Bullying Awareness Day for purposes of school recognition. The cost of establishing a special observance day relating to bullying will vary from district to district depending on what the district determines to be appropriate as specified under s. 118.02, Stats. Therefore, these costs are indeterminate.

Pupil records:

The bill includes a series of provisions dealing with the confidentiality and disclosure of pupil records.

State: The department will have to modify any information provided to school districts regarding pupil confidentiality and disclosure of pupil records. It is assumed that these costs will be absorbed by the department.

Local: All 426 public school districts will have to modify current policies established relating to confidentiality of pupil records to comply with the requirements under the bill. School district policies should be reviewed and updated periodically. It is assumed that modifying these policies will be absorbed by local school districts.

School districts may (but are not required to) establish additional policies to promote the disclosure of pupil records and information permitted by law for school safety. Any costs to school districts in meeting this provision are indeterminate as they are optional.

Public and private school administrators who receive information regarding a law enforcement action are no longer required to notify any pupil named in the information and the parent or guardian of any minor pupil named in the information. It is unknown how many administrators have had to notify pupils and their parents of a law enforcement action. Therefore, any cost savings related to this provision are indeterminate.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications