

Fiscal Estimate - 2021 Session

Original
 Updated
 Corrected
 Supplemental

LRB Number 21-2563/2	Introduction Number AB-0286
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Description
 a school extension learning recovery program following the 2020-21 school term

Fiscal Effect

State:

- No State Fiscal Effect
- Indeterminate
 - Increase Existing Appropriations
 - Decrease Existing Appropriations
 - Create New Appropriations
- Increase Existing Revenues
- Decrease Existing Revenues
- Increase Costs - May be possible to absorb within agency's budget
 - Yes No
- Decrease Costs

Local:

- No Local Government Costs
- Indeterminate
- 1. Increase Costs 3. Increase Revenue
- Permissive Mandatory Permissive Mandatory
- 2. Decrease Costs 4. Decrease Revenue
- Permissive Mandatory Permissive Mandatory
- 5. Types of Local Government Units Affected
- Towns Village Cities
- Counties Others
- School Districts WTCS Districts

Fund Sources Affected **Affected Ch. 20 Appropriations**

- GPR FED PRO PRS SEG SEGS

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Fiscal Estimate Narratives

DPI 4/28/2021

LRB Number	21-2563/2	Introduction Number	AB-0286	Estimate Type	Original
Description a school extension learning recovery program following the 2020-21 school term					

Assumptions Used in Arriving at Fiscal Estimate

Bill Provisions

This bill creates a requirement for schools to provide a school extension learning recovery (SELR) program following the end of each school's 2020-21 school term for schools in which fewer than 75% of all pupils enrolled or attending the school attended classes in person for at least 50 percent of the hours of instructions the school provided between the first day of the school term and April 15, 2021.

Under the bill "school" includes public schools, independent charter schools, and private schools participating in a private school parental choice program and/or the Special Needs Scholarship Program (SNSP). (The bill does not include an exclusion for virtual charter schools.)

The SELR program must be made available to all pupils who had enrolled/attended the school in 2020-21, but pupil participation is voluntary. The SELR program must address learning losses and negative academic impacts pupils experienced during the 2020-21 school year due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. All instruction under the SELR program must be in-person and must provide "six weeks of coursework and curriculum similar to that offered during regular school days during a regular school term, including academic instruction in mathematics, science, and reading". Additionally, the SELR program must provide meals and transportation for pupils.

Under the bill, schools must develop a plan for the program and submit it to DPI no later than 30 days before then end of their school term. DPI then has three weeks to notify a school of any changes to the plan. The bill includes provisions for re-evaluating pupils who attend the SELR program who had not received a high school diploma or had not been promoted to the next grade at the end of 2020-21 school year and specifies that a five-year-old kindergarten pupil who attends a SELR program approved by the DPI under the bill is considered to have completed five-year-old kindergarten for purposes of enrolling in first grade, under Wis. Stats. sec. 118.33 (6) (cm).

Under the bill, the SELR program is not to be considered as part of, or as an extension to, the 2020-21 school year (presumably, the costs of the SELR program would not be considered shared costs for purposes of general equalization aid).

Additionally, the bill specifies that the minutes of instruction provided under the SELR program would not be included as part of the summer school minutes of instruction for the 2020-21 school year (summer school minutes are converted to full time equivalent [FTE] and are included in a school district's pupil count for revenue limit and general aid membership). For school finance purposes, summer school starts a school year. The SELR program would be offered in summer 2021 under the bill, but the summer 2021 summer school minutes are applicable to the 2021-22 school year. Therefore, the bill's prohibition on including summer school minutes for the 2020-21 school year is a moot provision.

Finally, under the bill, schools must pay for with funding authorized specifically under the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), 2021 [PL 117-02]. For public schools, that would include funding authorized under ARPA as the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (i.e., ESSER III fund). ARPA also authorized additional funding for private schools as the Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools program (i.e., EANS II). However, the bill specifies that a school would be required to implement a SELR program only to the extent that it receives the federal (ARPA) moneys. It is very likely that ESSER III dollars will not be available until after summer 2021, as DPI must obtain approval for its ESSER III plan from Wisconsin's legislative Joint Committee on Finance (JCF) and from the US Department of Education for its ESSER III plan; only after those approvals will DPI be able to build the necessary grant application module in WISE grants (federal grants portal for schools). As the ARPA/ESSER III monies would not be available for summer 2021, it appears that schools will not have to offer a SELR program.

Local Impact

The bill does not alter any state-funded school aid programs or impact school district revenues under revenue limits. The bill directs schools that are required to implement a SELR program to use federal ARPA funds to cover the costs of the program. Schools would be required to do additional work to first determine applicability of the bill to the school (there is no existing comprehensive data collection that schools could turn to for this purpose); as well as design the SELR program and submit the school's plan for the program to DPI no later than 30 days prior to the last day of the school term. In addition to the costs of implementing a SELR program (staff, materials, transportation, and meals) schools may incur additional costs to ensure student and staff health and safety (e.g., personal protective equipment, cleaning services and supplies). However, as noted above, because the ARPA/ESSER III monies would not be available for summer 2021, it appears that schools will not have to offer a SELR program.

State Impact

The bill does not have a direct impact on the state, as no existing state appropriations are increased and no new state appropriations are created under the bill. However, the bill does require that DPI review all SELR program plans submitted by schools and to make modification if deemed necessary.

Long-Range Fiscal Implications