

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

Legislative Office Building, Room 5200
Hartford, CT 06106 ◊ (860) 240-0200
<http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa>

sSB-1200

AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL EDUCATION.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 24 \$	FY 25 \$
Local and Regional School Districts	See Below	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill results in costs to the State Department of Education (SDE) and local and regional school districts by making several changes to special education statutes. These impacts are described below.

Section 1 exempts federal COVID-related education funding from use in the calculation of the Excess Cost grant. This would result in a cost to SDE if the Excess Cost grant is fully funded beginning in FY 24. The grant has not been fully funded since FY 09.

The impact to districts will vary significantly based on the per-pupil level of federal COVID-related education funding each district received. Districts with relatively high levels of federal COVID-related education funding will have a larger positive impact on their Excess Cost reimbursements (all other factors held constant). Other districts may receive less than they would have, without this provision.

Primary Analyst: DD
Contributing Analyst(s): RDP
Reviewer: SB

4/12/23

Section 2 allows dual instruction when it is deemed necessary by a student's individualized education or Section 504 plan, beginning in FY 24. There is a cost, anticipated to be minimal, associated with any equipment a district would need to purchase to facilitate dual instruction (i.e., extra computers or monitors).

Section 3 expands the requirements of an existing task force studying special education funding in the state. This has no fiscal impact as it is not anticipated to increase the cost of completing the study.

Section 4 requires local and regional school districts to provide interpreters at planning and placement team meetings beginning in FY 24. Translation services typically cost between \$125-\$175 per hour, with a two-hour minimum. As an illustration, the Hartford school district typically has over 1,000 planning and placement team meetings per year. If 25%¹ of those meetings required a translator, at the required two-hour minimum, the cost to the district would vary from \$62,500 to \$87,500 annually.

Section 5 prohibits charter school student applications from inquiring about such students' need for or receipt of special education. This has no fiscal impact, as the provision would not impact the level of grant funding for charter schools.

Section 6 makes changes regarding the use of physical restraints and time out in schools, and the use of psychopharmacological medications. These changes have no fiscal impact, as they are not anticipated to change any cost associated with these practices.

Section 7 extends a Department of Public Health (DPH) school-based health center expansion grant program from the end of FY 23 to the start of FY 25, which prevents the agency from lapsing \$10 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding at the end of FY 23. It is anticipated that DPH will fully expend the program's ARPA funds in

¹ This is the percentage of Hartford's October 1, 2022 enrollment classified as English Learners.

FY 24.

Section 8 requires SDE to make available on its Web site information regarding certain complaint investigations. This has no fiscal impact as SDE has sufficient resources to post information online.

Section 9 prohibits local and regional school districts from disciplining employees who make recommendations concerning the provision of services to students with Section 504 plans. This has no fiscal impact.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.