OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS
Legislative Office Building, Room 5200
Hartford, CT 06106 ◇ (860) 240-0200
http://www.cga.ct.gov/ofa

sHB-6882
AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATION MANDATE RELIEF.
AMENDMENT
LCO No.: 9024
File Copy No.: 591
House Calendar No.: 362

OFA Fiscal Note

See Fiscal Note Details

The amendment strikes the underlying bill and its associated fiscal impact.

The amendment makes various changes to education statutes, which are described by section below.

Section 1 establishes a working group to review and identify mandates on the State Department of Education and local and regional school districts and make recommendations, by January 1, 2025, for any mandates that can be repealed. This has no fiscal impact, as it is anticipated that the working group can complete these requirements with existing resources.

Section 2 results in a potential cost beginning in FY 24 to local and regional school districts by expanding required training for school personnel to include emergency response to a student having a seizure. Any cost is anticipated to be minimal, associated with printing materials and with overtime coverage for staff to attend training. It also makes a clarifying change regarding school violence prevention training for school personnel which has no fiscal impact, as it is not anticipated to change the cost associated with such training.

Section 3 requires school districts to make available certain information regarding their curriculum. This is a procedural change with no fiscal impact.

Section 4 allows a public school student who is a father under age 17 to attend adult education classes. This has no fiscal impact as the eligibility expansion is not anticipated to significantly increase the cost of administering adult education programs.

Section 5 specifies the student eligibility for participation in remote learning and extends the deadline for the State Department of Education to submit a plan for a remote learning school by six months. This has no fiscal impact as it is not anticipated to impact the cost of developing the plan, if any.

To the extent that the bill limits what students are eligible to participate in remote learning, any impact this has on the cost of administering a remote learning school will depend on the plan ultimately developed by SDE.

Section 6 requires local and regional boards of education to make information relating to regular or special meetings available on the Internet web site of such boards. This has no fiscal impact as it is anticipated that local and regional boards of education can meet this requirement with existing resources.

Section 7 has no fiscal impact. It requires the State Department of Education to convene a family and community engagement council. The amendment does not require that any members of the council be reimbursed for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Section 8 requires SDE to conduct certain grant management activities for the After School program grant. Correspondingly, the bill increases, from 4% to 7.5%, the amount of After School program grant funding that the State Department of Education may retain for program administration. In FY 23, this would have resulted in an approximately $200,000 increase in the amount SDE may have retained from $230,000 to $430,000, and a commensurate decrease in the amount of funds provided to qualifying grant recipients.

Section 9 makes changes regarding the operation of the State Education Resource Center (SERC) that have no fiscal impact as the amendment does not change the level of any funding provided to SERC.

Section 10 delays, from FY 24 to FY 25, the cost to local and regional school districts of providing free menstrual products in certain restrooms. This does not change the overall cost of providing such products.

Sections 11 to 28 make technical and conforming changes to the education and early childhood statutes that result in no fiscal impact.

Sections 29 to 34 make several technical and conforming changes regarding grants and other revenues to magnet schools and certain Sheff programs, which have no fiscal impact. The changes are not anticipated to increase the cost of providing these programs or to affect magnet school tuition. Additionally, the bill includes minor changes to an interstate compact, which result in no fiscal impact.

Sections 35 and **37** expand the age eligibility for School Readiness programs from ages three and four, as well as children aged 5 not eligible to enroll in school, to birth through four years of age, inclusive, as well as those children aged 5 who are ineligible to enroll in school. This precludes future savings to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to the extent that the eligibility expansion for the School Readiness program results in the expenditure of funds that would have otherwise lapsed. Town-based providers would experience a corresponding revenue impact associated with the change in their School Readiness grant, based on the number of children being served.

Section 36 changes School Readiness grant awards from annual to biennial. While this does not change the total amount of funds expended, it may alter the distribution of funds, resulting in a revenue impact to town-based providers.

Section 39 precludes future savings to the Office of Early Childhood

(OEC) by eliminating the sunset date of the Smart Start program. By making the program permanent, OEC may incur future costs it otherwise would not have had the program ended, while towns will experience a corresponding revenue impact. The bill also potentially changes the distribution of Smart Start funding to towns by eliminating the option to give priority to plans that allocate spaces for children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches.

Section 40 results in a cost to the General Fund of at least $250,000 in FY 24 and FY 25 to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) to create a parent cabinet, including hiring one full-time employee to provide administrative assistance to meet the requirements of the amendment.

Section 41 is a conforming change and has no fiscal impact.

Section 42 allows charter schools and regional educational service centers (RESC) to join with other public school operators (e.g. local and regional school districts) and towns for the purpose of providing group health insurance plans to their employees. To the extent that this expands the pool of employees that can enter into group health care plans, there is a potential savings to municipalities and local and regional school districts associated with reduced health care costs.

Sections 43 and 44 make technical changes regarding charter schools and have no fiscal impact.

Section 45 requires the State Department of Education to employ at least one curriculum coordinator. This results in costs to SDE of $143,844 in FY 24 ($100,717 in salary and $43,127 in fringe) and $147,440 in FY 25 ($103,235 in salary and $44,205 in fringe).