OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS
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sSB-1288
AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 26 $	FY 27 $
Education, Dept.	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below
Treasurer, Debt Serv.	GF - See Below	See Below	See Below

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 26 $	FY 27 $
Local and Regional School Districts	Potential Savings	None	Potential
Local and Regional School Districts	See Below	See Below	See Below

Explanation

The bill makes several changes to various education statutes, resulting in the fiscal impacts described by section below.

Sections 3 – 4 expand eligible recipients of grants under an interdistrict magnet grant capital expense program, which is funded through General Obligation (GO) bonds. Future General Fund debt service costs may be incurred or incurred sooner due to the program's expansion to the degree that it causes authorized GO bond funds to be expended or to be expended more quickly than they otherwise would have been.

As of April 14, 2025, there is an unallocated bond balance of $2 million for the program. The bill does not change overall GO bond authorization levels.

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Reviewer: JS

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Section 5 changes the calculation structure for Sheff region choice school transportation grants and requires the grant to be based on actual transportation costs, beginning in FY 26. The impact will depend on the cost of relevant transportation services within the Sheff region and how that differs from the current calculation method's results, which is unknown. If the new structure results in additional annual cost to the State Department of Education (SDE) and a corresponding revenue gain to school districts and regional educational service centers (RESCs), it is expected to be less than $3 million per year. The account which funds these grants has lapsed approximately that amount annually in recent years.

Section 8 results in a potential savings to local and regional school districts beginning in FY 27. It requires private special education providers to provide base tuition and costs for services for each school year by December 31 of the preceding year in which services will be provided. This requirement will allow school districts to: (1) choose cost effective programs to meet student needs; and (2) plan for expenses related to private special education services.

The bill makes several technical, procedural, clarifying, and conforming changes regarding: (1) special education in the Open Choice program; (2) magnet school enrollment standards; (3) eliminating a requirement that early childhood through grade 3 educators take a survey on reading instruction; and (4) teacher certification.

The Out Years

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