



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE

STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT

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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number:	H. 3618	Introduced on January 12, 2021
Author:	Lucas	
Subject:	Student Assessments	
Requestor:	House Education and Public Works	
RFA Analyst(s):	Wren	
Impact Date:	January 20, 2021	

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill changes requirements for administering the SC READY, SCPASS, high school end-of-course assessments, and college entrance and career readiness assessments during the 2020-21 school year. The bill also waives school and district performance ratings for the 2020-21 school year.

The State Department of Education (SDE) indicates that the administration of the SC READY, SCPASS, and the end-of-course assessments to all students is currently planned and will have no expenditure impact on the agency as the majority of the contract for development of these tests has already been completed. If all students cannot be tested, there could be some cost savings due to a reduction in scoring and reporting, but the amount of this reduction is currently unknown. Last year, when all testing stopped, the department saved approximately \$1.3 million. Further, hiring a contractor to create a representative sample if all students do not take the assessments will increase expenses by approximately \$250,000 in FY 2020-21.

SDE surveyed the seventy-nine local school districts and the two charter school districts and received responses from eighteen districts. The responding districts indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact in FY 2020-21 since the bill does not alter the responsibilities of the districts. However, SDE expressed several potential concerns on behalf of the local districts. These concerns include the need for districts to provide transportation for the students currently attending virtually, the need to double testing days to maintain current hybrid schedules, and the need for additional substitutes to proctor classes where samples of students are taken for assessments.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 12, 2021

State Expenditure

This bill requires SDE to administer the SC READY, SCPASS (with the exception of the fifth and seventh grade SCPASS social studies assessment and the eighth grade SCPASS science assessments, which must not be administered), high school end-of-course assessments, and college entrance and career readiness assessments during the 2020-21 school year to provide statewide and district-level data. If these assessments cannot be administered to all students,

SDE must administer the assessments to a statistically significant sample of students in the 2020-21 school year to provide state-level data by subgroup. SDE must publish school and district report cards for the 2020-21 school year before October 1, 2021. School and district performance ratings are waived for the 2020-21 school year and may not be issued or included in the school or district report cards.

SDE indicates that the administration of the SC READY, SCPASS, and the end-of-course assessments to all students is currently planned and will have no expenditure impact on the agency. The majority of the contract for development of these tests has already been completed. SDE indicates that there could be some cost savings due to a reduction in scoring and reporting if all students are not tested, but the cost savings cannot be estimated at this time. Last year, when all testing stopped, the department saved approximately \$1.3 million. Any cost savings would be dependent on the timing of canceling the assessments.

SDE is assuming that all students will be issued the assessments. However, if the tests are not administered to all students, designing a sample that provides valid and reliable results to ensure that each school and subgroup are represented proportionally would increase expenses of the agency by approximately \$250,000 in FY 2020-21. This amount includes hiring a contractor to create a sample design to ensure validity and reliability and to evaluate results from the sample.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

This bill requires SDE to administer the SC READY, SCPASS (with the exception of the fifth and seventh grade SCPASS social studies assessment and the eighth grade SCPASS science assessments, which must not be administered), high school end-of-course assessments, and college entrance and career readiness assessments during the 2020-21 school year to provide statewide and district-level data. If these assessments cannot be administered to all students, SDE must administer the assessments to a statistically significant sample of students in the 2020-21 school year to provide state-level data by subgroup.

SDE surveyed the seventy-nine public school districts and two charter school districts and received responses from eighteen districts. The responding districts indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact since the bill does not alter the responsibilities of the districts. However, SDE expressed several potential concerns on behalf of the local districts. These concerns include the need for districts to provide transportation for the students currently attending virtually, the need to double testing days to maintain current hybrid schedules, and the need for additional substitutes to proctor classes where samples of students are taken for assessments.

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director