

Commission on Local Government

Estimate of Local Fiscal Impact
2012 General Assembly Session

Bill: HB 887 **Patron:** Alexander **Date:** January 19, 2012

In accordance with the provisions of §30-19.03 of the Code of Virginia, the staff of the Commission on Local Government offers the following analysis of the above-referenced legislation:

I. Bill Summary

Requires the superintendent of each school division to ensure that any student who has been suspended or expelled from school continues to receive an education. The Constitution of Virginia requires a compulsory elementary and secondary education for every eligible child of appropriate age.

II. Fiscal Impact Analysis

The Commission on Local Government (CLG) received fiscal impact statements from 10 localities - the Counties of Campbell, Carroll, Rappahannock, and Spotsylvania; the Cities of Danville, Radford, and Richmond; and the Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Hillsville. In addition, the Virginia Association of School Superintendents assisted the Commission in obtaining information from local school divisions, including Orange County Public Schools and Chesapeake Public Schools.

Five of the respondents – the Counties of Campbell and Spotsylvania and the Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Hillsville – indicated that they would not experience an increase in expenditures. Campbell County stated that they already meet the standards set in HB 887. The Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg and Hillsville indicated that the bill does not apply to them because they do not operate school systems.

The City of Radford stated that they would experience a cost increase of over \$5,000.

The remaining four localities – the Counties of Carroll and Rappahannock and the Cities of Danville and Richmond – responded that they would experience a net additional expenditure over \$5,000. The estimates ranged from a low of \$15,000 in Rappahannock County to a high of \$2,000,000 in the City of Richmond. Listed below are the cost estimates:

Carroll County:	\$62,000
Rappahannock County:	15,000
Danville City:	128,520
Richmond City:	2,000,000

Carroll County stated that they would use a virtual on-line school to ensure continued education and that it would cost about \$6,200 per child. Their estimate assumes 10 students suspended per year.

Rappahannock County indicated that they have had an average of one student expelled per year, and the cost of alternative education programs range between \$10,000 and \$20,000.

The City of Danville reported that about 68 students per year would meet the requirements of the legislation. Their estimate is based upon five hours of homebound instruction per week for an average of 18 weeks.

The City of Richmond believes it would cost at least \$2,000,000 to provide instructional services to every student who is expelled, assuming that qualified staff can be located who would provide these services to the students in their homes.

Chesapeake Public Schools provided a rough cost estimate of over \$2,000,000. They also noted that there would be staffing implications given the increased number of certified teachers needed to satisfy the mandate.

Orange County Public Schools reported that they would need to employ at least one additional full-time teacher to provide oversight of expelled students' educational needs. They indicated that their starting annual salary for teachers is \$37,094.

III. Conclusion

HB 887 will affect the counties, cities and two towns in the Commonwealth that operate public school systems. School districts would be required to ensure the education of all students who were expelled from the school system. Local public school divisions would be forced to either increase staff to comply with the mandate or use an on-line system. The expenditure increase will vary depending upon which approach they pursue and the number of expulsions in a particular school division.