

Department of Planning and Budget 2012 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB665

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Garrett

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: Standards of Learning; method of administration.

5. Summary: Allows a local school division to administer any Standards of Learning assessment for elementary school students online or by paper.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes, the appropriation in Item 133 would need to be amended to reflect the additional costs outlined below.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary. See item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: This legislation would permit local school divisions to administer any Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment for elementary school students either online or on paper. However, pursuant to Item 132, section C.12.g.1), Chapter 890, 2011 Acts of Assembly, school divisions are required to administer 100 percent of SOL tests online in elementary, middle and high schools by fiscal year 2013. This language is also contained in the Governor's introduced budget for the 2012-2014 biennium (Senate Bill 30); therefore, unless the budget language was amended in conjunction with the passage of this legislation, the existing language in the Appropriation Act would override this legislation. If the budget language is modified to conform to the provisions of this bill, there could be a significant fiscal impact to the state.

The current contract with the testing provider allows for the administration of some paper tests for students who have a documented need for a paper test. However, the budget estimates were developed based on the assumption that the number of students taking SOL tests using the paper format would be relatively small. If school divisions decide to administer the elementary SOL tests using the paper format in fiscal year 2013 and beyond, this would create an unanticipated cost that was not incorporated into the testing budget.

Moreover, a full-scale field test of the online writing assessment is already in progress in preparation for the transition to the online format by fiscal year 2013. Additional development and field testing would be needed to reconstruct the online writing test in a paper format. The cost of the spring 2011 SOL writing test in grade five using the online format was \$9.33, whereas, the cost of the paper format was \$12.61, a difference of \$3.28 per

test. Therefore, the Department of Education estimates that it will cost the Department an additional \$2.6 million per year to permit school divisions to administer the elementary tests in either paper or online format. This figure does not include additional costs for test development and field testing, which would need to be negotiated with the testing provider.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Department of Education and local school divisions.

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: Yes, in order for this legislation to become effective, the language cited above in the approved budget must conform to the provisions of this bill.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 1/27/12

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