

Department of Planning and Budget

2019 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB1218

House of Origin ☐ Introduced ☒ Substitute ☐ Engrossed
Second House ☐ In Committee ☐ Substitute ☐ Enrolled

2. Patron: Newman

3. Committee: Finance

4. Title: Public high schools; Standards of Learning assessments.

5. Summary: Requires the end-of-course Standards of Learning assessments administered to students in grades nine through 12 to include reading, writing, mathematics, biology, and Virginia and U.S. history. The bill requires each such Standards of Learning assessment to consist of a Board-developed end-of-course assessment and prohibits such assessment from being performance-based. The bill requires the end-of course writing assessment to include a writing sample.

The bill requires each school board to annually certify that it has provided instruction and administered an alternative assessment, consistent with Board guidelines, to students enrolled in a high school course in mathematics, science, or history and social science for which an end-of-course Standards of Learning assessment was administered prior to July 1, 2019. The bill requires the Department of Education to perform reviews on such locally administered alternative assessments for high school courses and requires such reviews to meet criteria designed to support comparability of assessments across school divisions and years.

The bill requires the Board, in its graduation requirements, to require students to earn a verified unit of credit in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and Virginia and U.S. History. Each such verified credit shall be earned only by (i) the successful completion of a Board-developed end-of-course Standards of Learning assessment; (ii) achievement of a passing score on a Board-approved standardized test administered on a statewide, multistate, or international basis that measures content that incorporates or exceeds the Standards of Learning content in the course for which the verified credit is given; or (iii) achievement of criteria for the receipt of a locally awarded verified credit from the local school board in accordance with criteria established in Board guidelines when the student has not passed the corresponding Standards of Learning assessment. No such Board-developed end-of-course Standards of Learning assessment shall be a performance-based assessment. However, the Board may permit any student transferring into public high school in the Commonwealth at the beginning of his eleventh grade year or thereafter to graduate with a reduced number of verified credits as provided in Board regulations.

The provisions of this bill would become effective beginning with first-time ninth grade students in the 2019-2020 school year. Additionally, the Department of Education must review alternative assessments administered to students who were enrolled in a high school

course in mathematics, science, or history and social science for which an end-of-course Standards of Learning Assessment was administered prior to July 1, 2019. Such review shall meet criteria designed to support comparability of assessments across school divisions and years. The Department of Education shall report such review, based on 2019-2020 school year outcomes, to the Chairmen of the House Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education and Health by December 1, 2020.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No

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

8. Fiscal Implications: The Senate substitute of SB1218 removes the provisions related to the fifth and eighth grade writing Standards of Learning (SOL) tests, and it removes the requirement that the Department of Education (DOE) conduct performance audits on locally-administered alternative assessments for high school courses. DOE anticipates that the provisions of the Senate substitute of SB1218 can be absorbed by existing agency resources. Any fiscal impact to local school divisions is indeterminate.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: None