

**Department of Planning and Budget
2013 Fiscal Impact Statement**

1. Bill Number: SB782

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

2. Patron: McEachin

3. Committee: Education and Health

4. Title: Standards of Accreditation.

5. Summary: Senate Bill 782 proposes to amend section 22.1-253.13:3 of the *Code of Virginia* to specify that no school shall be fully accredited if any student subgroup as identified in the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended, does not demonstrate proficiency on the Standards of Learning (SOL) assessments. Additionally, the Board of Education shall consider high school graduation rates, the rate of student academic progress in all student subgroups identified in the ESEA of 1965, as amended, and progress toward narrowing gaps in student proficiency on SOL assessments among all student subgroups when recognizing the educational performance of school divisions. Finally, this legislation proposes to modify the SOL assessments to evaluate “progress toward obtaining knowledge” in addition to the previously defined purposes of SOL assessments.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Indeterminate.

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

8. Fiscal Implications: The legislation does not clarify intent by defining the phrases “any student subgroup” and “demonstrate proficiency.” As currently drafted, the language could mean that all students in each subgroup must pass the tests for the school to be fully accredited. Alternatively, the intent of the bill could be that all subgroups must either meet the accreditation benchmark or the federal accountability targets. Any of these scenarios could lead to an increase in the number of schools that are not fully accredited. Schools rated Accredited with Warning or Provisionally Accredited-Graduation Rate must undergo an academic review in accordance with guidelines adopted by the Board and prepare a school improvement plan.

Modifying the purposes of the SOL assessments to evaluate “progress toward obtaining knowledge” could potentially alter current SOL assessments and require a redesign of the tests. Therefore, based on the potential increase in the number of schools in school improvement requiring an academic review and a potential modification of the SOL assessments, passage of this bill could result in a state fiscal impact; however, given the lack of clarity in the present form of the bill regarding the aforementioned phrases, it is not possible to reliably estimate the potential state fiscal impact at this time.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No.

11. Other Comments: None.

Date: 1/15/13

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