

Department of Planning and Budget 2017 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB1408

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

2. **Patron:** Ware

3. **Committee:** Education and Health

4. **Title:** Student vision screenings; requirements for certain students.

5. **Summary:** Requires (i) the principal of each public elementary school to cause the vision of students in kindergarten and grade two or grade three to be tested, unless such students are admitted for the first time to a public elementary school and produce a written record of a comprehensive eye examination performed within the preceding 24 months or the parents or guardians of such students object on religious grounds, and (ii) the principal of each public middle school and high school to cause the vision of students in grade seven and grade 10 to be tested, unless such students produce a written record of a comprehensive eye examination performed within the preceding 24 months or the parents or guardians of such students object on religious grounds. Any such screenings may be conducted by a qualified nonprofit vision health organization that uses a digital photoscreening method pursuant to a comprehensive vision program or other methods that comply with Department of Education requirements. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, such screenings may be conducted at any time during the school year; however, the scheduling of such screenings must be completed no later than the sixtieth administrative working day of the school year. The bill defines "qualified nonprofit vision health organization" and "comprehensive vision program." Under current law, the timing and frequency of such vision screenings is determined by the Board of Education pursuant to regulations, and the method and provider of such vision screenings is determined by the local school board.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** No

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** Vision screenings of public school students are conducted by school nurses within the local school divisions, who are partially funded by the state through the Standards of Quality. As proposed in this legislation, any local contracts with outside providers for vision screening would generate additional costs for the local school divisions and not the state. Those costs are indeterminate.

The House provides an amendment to the budget that includes \$300,000 general fund in FY 2018 to fund a maximum of five pilot programs to provide optional vision screenings.

Eligible school divisions would receive \$4.95 for each student enrolled in kindergarten, grade three, grade seven, and grade 10 as reported in 2017 fall membership, with no division receiving more than \$60,000 in total funding related to this pilot program.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: None