

Department of Planning and Budget 2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB168

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

2. **Patron:** Murphy

3. **Committee:** Education

4. **Title:** Class size limits; grades six through 12; science laboratory classes.

5. **Summary:** Establishes a maximum class size of 24 students in science laboratory classes in grades six through 12.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 136.

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** This bill establishes a maximum class size of 24 students in science laboratory classes in grades six through 12. The current Standards of Quality (SOQ) funding model does not include a mechanism to calculate the fiscal impact of these changes. Therefore, to estimate a state fiscal impact, the Department of Education (DOE) made the assumptions below using 2017 Fall Membership data and the existing SOQ standard for a maximum class size of 24 students in grades six through 12 English classes as a proxy.

Using 2017 Fall Membership data, DOE identified 676,930 students in grades six through 12 statewide for the 2017-2018 school year. Furthermore, for the 2017-2018 school year, DOE identified 670,493 instances of students enrolled in science classes in grades six through 12, which accounts for individual students enrolled in one or multiple science classes. Based on these enrollment figures, DOE estimates 99 percent enrollment in science classes for grades six through 12 statewide. To estimate the fiscal impact of this bill, DOE assumed that only science classes in grades nine through 12 have a laboratory component.

Based on the state cost to implement the current English class size standard for grades six through 12, DOE accounted for the percentage of students enrolled in science classes and the percentage of science classes with a laboratory component. Using these assumptions, DOE estimates an additional state cost of \$6.1 million in FY 2019 and \$6.1 million in FY 2020 to establish a maximum class size of 24 students in science laboratory classes in grades six through 12. The actual state cost for outgoing fiscal years is indeterminate at this time because future costs will be impacted by the rebenchmarking process and future enrollment changes.

Local school divisions would be required to provide the local share of any additional state funds based on each division's local composite index; however, some divisions already may be meeting these maximum class sizes and, therefore, would have no additional costs. Furthermore, there could be a cost to localities to construct additional classroom space to accommodate additional teachers and smaller class sizes, including additional science laboratory equipment. In divisions where additional classrooms or teachers are needed to comply with the provisions of this bill, the reductions in maximum class sizes may create capital costs if classroom space is not available. Any actual cost to localities is indeterminate at this time.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: None