

Department of Planning and Budget 2018 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** SB229

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

2. **Patron:** Hanger

3. **Committee:** Passed both houses

4. **Title:** School bus personnel; training program; autism spectrum disorders.

5. **Summary:** Requires the Board of Education to establish a training program for school board employees who assist in the transportation of students on school buses, including individuals employed to operate school buses and school bus aides, on autism spectrum disorders, including the characteristics of autism spectrum disorders, strategies for interacting with students with autism spectrum disorders, and collaboration with other employees who assist in the transportation of students on school buses. The bill requires each school board employee who assists in the transportation of students on school buses to participate in such training program.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** No

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** In 2016, the Department of Education (DOE) developed an online module to provide autism training for transportation providers, which offers perspectives and strategies for working with students with autism and supporting their communication and behavioral needs in a transportation setting. This module, accessed through the Virginia Commonwealth University Autism Center for Excellence website, can be used for a single, two-hour training or as a series of short knowledge boosters. Local school divisions may access the training at no cost, according to their local approach and timing, to ensure that appropriate employees receive training, in accordance with the provisions of this bill. DOE notified local school divisions of this training in a Superintendent's Memorandum issued in December 2016. Consequently, there is no anticipated state cost to meet the provisions of this bill.

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

10. **Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

11. **Other Comments:** None