

## 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:** Education and Health

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

**5. Summary:** Requires the Standards of Learning assessments administered to students in grades nine through twelve to include reading, writing, mathematics, science, 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 from being performance-based. 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 taking other high school courses in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and history and social science. The bill requires such Board guidelines to ensure that such assessments produce quantifiable metrics and performance measures that are comparable across school divisions and years. The bill requires the Department of Education to perform reviews and performance audits on such locally administered alternative assessments for high school courses. 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. The bill requires each such verified credit to 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.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 130.

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

**7a. Expenditure Impact:**

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2019	\$0	0	N/A
2020	\$2,325,000	0	General Fund
2021	\$2,525,000	0	General Fund
2022	\$1,950,000	0	General Fund
2023	\$1,950,000	0	General Fund

2024	\$1,950,000	0	General Fund
2025	\$1,950,000	0	General Fund

**8. Fiscal Implications:** This bill requires the Department of Education (DOE) to reinstate the fifth grade writing Standards of Learning (SOL) test, which was eliminated during the 2014 General Assembly session and subsequently removed from all test administration and scoring systems. Reinstating this test will require the test forms and scoring information to be reloaded into the test administration and scoring systems. Delivering the online versions of the test will require the test items and prompts to be reconfigured to be compatible with an upgraded test delivery system.

New writing standards have been adopted since the test was eliminated; therefore, new test items must be developed, field tested, and reviewed by teacher committees. Artificial intelligence scoring, implemented as a cost-savings measure for the second read of SOL writing tests after 2014, needs to be established for fifth grade writing. This will require additional hand scoring of student tests until the scoring engine is adequately trained. Finally, audio, large print, and braille versions of test items need to be developed. DOE estimates a state cost of \$1,150,000 spread over two years to reinstate the fifth grade writing SOL test. Because this bill also eliminates the eighth grade writing tests, those test administration costs can be shifted over to the new fifth grade assessment resulting in no additional test administration costs.

The bill requires school divisions to administer an alternative assessment, consistent with Board guidelines, to students enrolled in a required high school course in reading, writing, mathematics science, and history and social science and requires DOE to perform reviews and performance audits of the alternative assessments. Because the required high school courses may vary across school divisions, for the purpose of this fiscal impact estimate, it is assumed that the courses for which an alternative assessment will be required are restricted to those for which an end-of-course SOL test was previously administered. Such tests included World History I, World History II and World Geography, as well as two of the three end-course tests currently administered in science.

Because both science and history are content-based subject areas, providing consistent scoring of student work prepared in response to performance tasks that vary across school divisions presents significant challenges. To address these challenges and to ensure consistency among the tasks being audited, school divisions will administer a state-provided performance task. While additional tasks might be administered by school divisions, only student work from the state-provided task would be audited.

To facilitate the audit, DOE must implement a system for student registrations so an audit sample can be identified, and the system must allow each school division to upload their student assessments and local scores being audited. In preparation for local scoring and audit scoring, exemplars of students' work at different score points would be used to train scorers. State-developed, common rubrics already exist in history; however, science rubrics will need to be developed in year one. Therefore, annual audit scoring of alternative assessments for three high school history tests will begin by trained scorers in year one and similar audit

scoring for two science tests will begin in year two. The estimated cost of auditing alternative assessments in year one is \$1,750,000. The estimated cost in year two, which will also continue as annual recurring costs, is \$1,950,000.

The Department of Education (DOE) estimates a total state cost of \$2,325,000 in FY 2020, \$2,525,000 in FY 2021, and \$1,950,000 annually beginning in FY 2022 to meet the provisions of this bill.

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

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

**11. Other Comments:** This bill is identical to HB2338.