

Department of Planning and Budget 2020 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** HB1277

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

2. **Patron:** O'Quinn

3. **Committee:** Committee Referral Pending

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

5. **Summary:** Reduces the total number and type of required Standards of Learning assessments to the minimum requirements established by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 139.

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Education (DOE) estimates a state general fund savings of \$1,563,000 in FY 2021 and outgoing years. This estimate is based upon reduced test administration costs, as this bill would eliminate the following assessments:

History:

- Virginia Studies
- Civics & Economics
- End-of-Course World History to 1500
- End-of-Course World History: 1500 to the Present
- End-of-Course World Geography
- End-of-Course Virginia and United States History

Science:

- End-of-Course Earth Science
- End-of-Course Chemistry

Writing:

- Grade 8 Writing
- End-of-Course Writing

Current law requires each school board to annually certify that it has provided instruction and administered an alternative assessment, consistent with Board guidelines, to students in grades three through eight in each Standards of Learning subject area in which a Standards of

Learning assessment was not administered during the school year. As such, this bill would require local school divisions to implement local alternative assessments in place of three eliminated SOL tests at the grade three through eight level: Virginia Studies, Civics & Economics, and Grade 8 Writing. Local school divisions may incur a cost to implement these alternative assessments. In addition, eliminating the End-of-Course Writing test as a means for students to earn the verified credit in writing needed for graduation would require school divisions to either implement local performance assessments in writing or use a score on a Board-approved substitute test to meet this requirement. Local school divisions may incur a cost to implement these alternative assessments. While school divisions have had the option to implement performance assessments for students to earn verified credits in writing since 2018-2019, many have chosen not to pursue this option because of the impact on local resources. Furthermore, eliminating the four End-of-Course History tests could limit students' ability to earn verified credits in history needed for graduation. Although there is language in the Governor's introduced budget (HB/SB 30) to implement a performance assessment in history, the only other option for students to earn a verified credit in history is a score on a substitute test associated with advanced coursework (e.g., Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate). Local school divisions may incur a cost to implement these alternative assessments. Any actual fiscal impact to local school divisions is indeterminate at this time.

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 SB 390 and similar to SB 847 and HB 931.