

Department of Planning and Budget 2020 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB847

House of Origin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Introduced	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Engrossed
Second House	<input type="checkbox"/> In Committee	<input type="checkbox"/> Substitute	<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled

2. Patron: Pillion

3. Committee: Education and Health

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

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. The bill requires the Department of Education to annually report on the estimated projected and actual savings from the implementation of the bill and report the amount of such savings to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance no later than the first day of each Regular Session of the General Assembly. The bill also requires that such amount be included in the total for Direct Aid to Public Education in any general appropriation act.

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.

The second enactment requires DOE to report annually on the estimated projected and actual savings from the implementation of this bill no later than the first day of each Regular Session of the General Assembly. The bill requires such amount to be included in the total for Direct Aid to Public Education in any general appropriation act. There should not be any additional savings from this bill in outgoing fiscal years unless the federal government changes its minimum requirements.

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 HB 931 and similar to SB 390 and HB 1277.