



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

FISCAL NOTE

SENATE BILL NO. 664

PRINTERS NO. 940

PRIME SPONSOR: Corman

COST / (SAVINGS)

FUND	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22
General Fund	\$0	See Fiscal Impact

SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 664 amends the Public School Code concerning extended special education enrollment due to COVID-19 and an optional year of education due to COVID-19. It would take effect immediately.

ANALYSIS:

Senate Bill 664 adds a new section to the School Code concerning extended special education enrollment due to COVID-19. It entitles a special education student who has reached 21 years of age during the 2020-2021 school year or between the end of the 2020-2021 school year and the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year and is enrolled for the 2020-2021 school year to attend a school entity for the 2021-2022 school year and the school entity must enroll the student if a parent or guardian and the student elects to enroll no later than July 15, 2021. The school entity must implement the student's most recent Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The student's attendance will be included in the school entity's average daily membership and the school entity shall provide extended school year services during the summer after the 2020-2021 school year in accordance with the student's most recent IEP.

This legislation also adds a new section to the School Code concerning an optional year of education due to COVID-19. It provides that, for the 2021-2022 school year, a parent or guardian may elect no later than July 15, 2021, to have a child under the age of 18 to repeat a grade level to make up for any lost educational opportunities due to COVID-19, notwithstanding whether the child met the requirements to be promoted to the next grade level. A child at or over the age of 18 may elect, no later than July 15, 2021, to repeat a grade level to make up for any lost educational opportunities due to COVID-19. This election will include participation in academic or extracurricular activities, including interscholastic athletics. However, it will not allow a child to have more years of eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics than they would have had notwithstanding the choice provided under this legislation.

A school entity must create an online application for this optional year of education and provide access to it on its website.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Enactment of this legislation could have a fiscal impact on the Commonwealth and school entities to the extent that students and their parents or guardians elect to have the students repeat a year of education due to COVID-19. The latest data from school district annual financial reports for 2019-20 indicates the average current expenditure per student statewide is \$16,577. The actual cost for a school entity will vary based on the entity's individual costs and the number of students who participate.

An additional year of special education beyond age 21 could also have a fiscal impact on school entities. The Department of Education's latest Report on Special Education Expenditures provides information on special education costs. Based on data in this report, for every one percent of special education students in high cost categories that opt for education beyond age 21, additional costs statewide could range from \$12 million to \$20 million.

The federal American Rescue Plan Act has allocated \$5 billion to Pennsylvania through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. Based on federal law, \$1.15 billion is available to address learning loss due to COVID-19. Any additional expenses resulting from this legislation should qualify as eligible expenditures under this federal act.

PREPARED BY: Jeff Miller
House Appropriations Committee (R)

DATE: June 23, 2021

Estimates are calculated using the best information available. Actual costs and revenue impact incurred may vary from estimates.