

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 80TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

March 26, 2007

TO: Honorable Florence Shapiro, Chair, Senate Committee on Education

FROM: John S. O'Brien, Director, Legislative Budget Board

IN RE: SB840 by Lucio (Relating to professional development institutes for public school teachers and paraprofessionals regarding education of students with disabilities.), **As Introduced**

Estimated Two-year Net Impact to General Revenue Related Funds for SB840, As Introduced: a negative impact of (\$7,033,000) through the biennium ending August 31, 2009.

The bill would make no appropriation but could provide the legal basis for an appropriation of funds to implement the provisions of the bill.

General Revenue-Related Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Net Positive/(Negative) Impact to General Revenue Related Funds
2008	(\$3,611,000)
2009	(\$3,422,000)
2010	(\$3,422,000)
2011	(\$3,422,000)
2012	(\$3,422,000)

All Funds, Five-Year Impact:

Fiscal Year	Probable Savings/(Cost) from GENERAL REVENUE FUND 1	Change in Number of State Employees from FY 2007
2008	(\$3,611,000)	1.0
2009	(\$3,422,000)	2.0
2010	(\$3,422,000)	2.0
2011	(\$3,422,000)	2.0
2012	(\$3,422,000)	2.0

Fiscal Analysis

The bill would require the commissioner of education to develop and provide professional development institutes for teachers and paraprofessionals relating to research-based instructional services for students with disabilities, including autism spectrum disorder. The bill would require the commissioner of education to adopt criteria for the selection of teachers and paraprofessionals authorized to attend the professional development institute. The criteria would be designed to give priority to teachers and paraprofessionals who have a significant level of professional contact with students with autism spectrum disorders. The commissioner would be required to pay a stipend to each teacher or paraprofessional who completes a professional development institute. The amount of the stipend would be determined by the commissioner. Costs to the state under the bill would be anticipated in association with the development and provision of professional development institutes, selection of participants, and stipends for participants.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2007.

Methodology

The Texas Education Agency indicates that there are a wide variety of applicable professional development opportunities provided by regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) with costs ranging from free to \$150 and averaging \$45 to \$50. For example, ESC IV provides a professional development seminar, the Foundations in Autism Series, for 6 days at a cost of \$20 per teacher or paraprofessional. School districts are required to cover the cost of travel, hotel and food for this program. This training is currently funded partially by state or federal grants. ESC IV also offers a six-module online course available free of charge to districts within ESC Region IV and \$250 per district for an annual site license. Other ESCs offer similar training ranging in cost from \$45 - \$150 per person. Training is research-based and includes training on teaching the required curriculum and managing behaviors. For the purpose of this estimate, it is assumed that costs associated with developing institutes would be minimized by the using available resources, such as those described to the greatest extent possible to create a coherent professional development institute for teachers and paraprofessionals of students with disabilities, including autism spectrum disorders. One-time costs of about \$250,000 in FY2008 are anticipated to complete the development process.

The Texas Education Agency assumes that the cost per participant to be approximately \$250. The Agency indicates that this cost would mainly be for stipends provided to institute participants. Assuming that on average approximately 3.0-3.5% of teachers and paraprofessionals or about 13,200 individuals were to attend these professional development institutes each year beginning in FY2008, costs associated with stipends would be anticipated to be about \$3.3 million per year.

The Agency estimates that a total of 2.0 FTEs will be required to implement and administer the professional development institutes program. Specifically, one FTE would be required to administer this program during FY 2008 and an additional FTE would be needed beginning in FY 2009. These resources would be required to coordinate the development of the professional development institute and verify completion of the program to award stipends to participating teachers and paraprofessionals. Staff-related costs would be estimated to total \$61,000 in FY2008, increasing to about \$122,000 in FY2009 and subsequent years.

Local Government Impact

No significant fiscal implication to units of local government is anticipated.

It is assumed that school districts would have local discretion in choosing whether to nominate staff for selection to participate in professional development institutes and that travel and lodging costs would be a local responsibility.

Source Agencies:

LBB Staff: JOB, UP, JSp