

LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD
Austin, Texas

FISCAL NOTE, 81ST LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

April 15, 2009

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

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

IN RE: SB1125 by Zaffirini (relating to transition and employment services for public school students enrolled in special education programs.), **Committee Report 1st House, Substituted**

No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.

The bill would require that commissioner rules related to transition services' planning for public school students receiving special education services begin when the student reaches 14 years of age.

The bill would require the Texas Education Agency, with assistance from the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), to develop a comprehensive transition and employment manual for students and parents with updates every two years. The TEA would be authorized to contract with a private entity to prepare the manual. In addition, the bill would require the TEA to develop a summary document of the manual.

TEA indicates that they expect no significant costs associated with the development of the Performance-Based Monitoring Analysis System (PBMAS) indicator regarding the preparation of students enrolled in special education programs to transition to life outside the public school system.

TEA estimates costs of \$345,000 in 2010 to develop and produce English and Spanish language versions of the comprehensive transition and employment manual and summary document and \$172,500 in 2011 and \$172,500 in every other year for manual and summary document updates. The agency expects that these costs could be absorbed by federal funds without a significant impact to agency operations or programs.

Local Government Impact

School districts would incur additional transition planning costs due to expansion of the requirement to initiate transition planning for an increased number of students receiving special education. The Texas Education Agency indicates that approximately 80,000 students ages 14 and 15 currently receive special education services.

Administrative rules that were in place until November 2007 required transition planning to begin at age 14. As a result, it is possible that some transition planning has already occurred for a portion of current 15-year-old special education students. In addition, federal regulations permit transition planning to begin earlier than age 16 when appropriate. Based on these circumstances and anecdotal information, it is reasonable to assume that the practice of transition planning for students younger than age 16 is not uncommon among districts. However, additional local costs would be anticipated for districts that are not currently conducting transition planning at age 14 for all or a portion of students. Additional costs associated with plan development, including interaction with local representatives of state agencies providing adult services and processes to obtain and document parental consent would be expected.

Source Agencies: 701 Central Education Agency

LBB Staff: JOB, JSp, JGM, JW