

Department of Planning and Budget

2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB265

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

2. Patron: Hashmi

3. Committee: Finance and Appropriations

4. Title: Children who are deaf or hard of hearing; language development, assessment resources.

5. Summary: Requires the Department of Education, in coordination with the Department for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing and the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, to (i) select, with input from an advisory committee that the bill establishes, language developmental milestones and include such milestones in a resource for use by parents of a child from birth to age five who is identified as deaf or hard of hearing to monitor and track their child's expressive and receptive language acquisition and developmental stages toward English literacy; (ii) disseminate such resource to such parents; (iii) select existing tools or assessments for educators for use in assessing the language and literacy development of children from birth to age five who are deaf or hard of hearing; (iv) disseminate such tools or assessments to local educational agencies and provide materials and training on their use; and (v) annually produce a report that compares the language and literacy development of children from birth to age five who are deaf or hard of hearing with the language and literacy development of their peers who are not deaf or hard of hearing and make such report available to the public on its website.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes, Item 132 and Item 311 of HB/SB 30.

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary, see Item 8.

Expenditure Impact:

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Dollars</i>	<i>Positions</i>	<i>Fund</i>
2023	\$249,280	0	General
2024	\$119,280	0	General
2025	\$119,280	0	General
2026	\$119,280	0	General
2027	\$119,280	0	General
2028	\$119,280	0	General
2029	\$119,280	0	General

8. Fiscal Implications: The Department of Education (DOE) will be responsible for supporting the advisory committee required by this bill. DOE estimates an annual state cost of \$21,760

to support two committee meetings each year; however, the bill does not stipulate meeting frequency, so the actual number of meetings per year is indeterminate. DOE's estimated cost for two meetings each year includes American Sign Language interpreter costs (two interpreters at \$55 per hour for 16 hours each), as well as Communication Access Realtime Translation (\$125 per hour for 16 hours). This estimate also includes \$18,000 for meals, mileage, and lodging for 25 participants, as required by §§ 2.2-2183 and 2.2-2825, Code of Virginia. These meeting costs are ongoing.

Additionally, DOE would be responsible for training local staff on the use of assessment tools. DOE estimates an annual training cost of \$48,760, assuming two training sessions per year. This estimated cost includes American Sign Language interpreter costs as well as Communication Access Realtime Translation. These training costs are ongoing.

Further, DOE would be responsible for developing parent resources, as well as tools and assessments to monitor the students' developmental stages towards literacy. DOE would need to contract with a provider to create these resources and estimates a one-time state cost of \$100,000 to develop the required tools and assessments.

Teaching positions for licensed teachers with an endorsement in Deaf and Hard of Hearing PreK-12, are considered hard-to-fill. Due to critical shortages, many school divisions utilize staffing agencies to secure contracted service providers on a full or part-time basis. Local school divisions would incur costs to provide substitutes for the selected teachers/specialists, both employed and contracted by school divisions, to participate in training on the use of the specific assessment tool(s) as specified in the bills. These local costs are indeterminate.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) Early Intervention program does not currently conduct hearing-specific assessments. If an assessment tool is implemented, DBHDS would need to update the existing Early Intervention data system to include that data. DBHDS estimates a one-time cost of \$30,000 for this update based on a quote from the agency's current vendor. Additionally, DBHDS would need to train providers and disseminate materials to parents of children served through the Early Intervention program, and this would have additional ongoing costs similar to those estimated by DOE of approximately \$48,760 each year.

The Department for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing anticipates that it can provide the assistance required by this bill with existing agency resources.

- 9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Department of Education, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Department for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, local school divisions

- 10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

- 11. Other Comments:** This bill is similar to HB649.