

## Department of Planning and Budget 2022 Fiscal Impact Statement

**1. Bill Number:** HB636

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:** Carr

**3. Committee:** Education

**4. Title:** Virginia student environmental literacy; plan; grant fund and program.

**5. Summary:** Requires the Board of Education, in consultation with the Department of Environmental Quality, the Department of Health, any other stakeholder that it deems appropriate, and the public, and in order to assist each local school board in developing and implementing a program of instruction for grades kindergarten through 12 that is aligned to the Standards of Learning and emphasizes environmental literacy as an essential skill and concept of citizenship that is necessary for responsible participation in American society and in the international community, to establish and update at least once every five years a Virginia student environmental literacy plan (the plan) that (i) prepares students to understand, analyze, and address the major environmental challenges facing the Commonwealth and the United States; (ii) provides field experiences as part of regular school curricula and creates programs that contribute to healthy lifestyles through outdoor recreation and sound nutrition; and (iii) creates opportunities for the enhanced and ongoing professional development of teachers that improves teachers' environmental subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills in teaching about environmental issues, including the use of interdisciplinary, field-based, and research-based learning and innovative technology in the classroom. The bill requires the plan to include a description of (a) how the Board will measure the environmental literacy of students, including relevant Standards of Learning and related curricula and courses or subjects where environmental education instruction will be integrated throughout grades kindergarten through 12 curricula, and the relationship of the plan to the high school graduation requirements established by the Board; (b) programs for the professional development of teachers to improve teachers' environmental subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills in teaching about environmental issues, including the use of interdisciplinary, field-based, and research-based learning and innovative technology in the classroom; and (c) how the Board will implement the plan, including securing funding and other necessary support. The bill establishes the Virginia Student Environmental Literacy Plan Grant Fund and Program, to be administered by the Department of Education, for the purpose of awarding grants on a competitive basis to any local school board that seeks assistance to initiate, expand, or improve teacher professional development opportunities or student environmental education programs that align with the content and objectives of the plan.

**6. Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 129.

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

**8. Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Education (DOE) would require additional staff to lead the collaborative effort to develop and implement a statewide plan and oversee the proposed Virginia Student Environmental Literacy Plan Grant Fund and Program. This work includes securing funding and other necessary support to divisions for implementation of programs. DOE estimates that it would require \$78,000 in wage support annually to administer the environmental literacy program. The estimate is based on 30 hours of work per week at an hourly rate of \$50.

There is no anticipated fiscal impact to the Department of Environmental Quality or the Department of Health.

**9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected:** Board of Education, Department of Education, Department of Environmental Quality, Department of Health

**10. Technical Amendment Necessary:** No

**11. Other Comments:** None