

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6769

BILL NUMBER: HB 1137

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 27, 2024

BILL AMENDED: Feb 26, 2024

SUBJECT: Religious Instruction and School Chaplains.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Culp

FIRST SPONSOR: Sen. Raatz

BILL STATUS: As Passed Senate

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: Local

Summary of Legislation: *Religious Instruction:* This bill requires a principal to allow a student to attend religious instruction conducted by certain entities following the principal's receipt of written notice from the student's parent. It allows a principal or superintendent of a public school, including a charter school, to employ, or approve as a volunteer, a school chaplain if certain requirements are met.

School Chaplains: The bill provides that a school chaplain may only provide secular support to a student or an employee of the school unless permission is given by:

- (1) the student receiving services if the student is an emancipated minor or adult;
- (2) the employee of the school receiving services; or
- (3) a parent of the student and the student receiving services if the student is an unemancipated minor;

to provide nonsecular support. It provides that a school chaplain is not required to divulge privileged or confidential communications with a student under certain circumstances. It provides that a school chaplain and a school counselor are subject to duties to report or disclose certain information.

Effective Date: July 1, 2024.

Explanation of State Expenditures:

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *School Chaplains:* This bill could increase expenditures for public schools who choose to employ a chaplain by approximately \$65,000 per chaplain. This cost may be offset

if the school chooses to hire a chaplain instead of other types of student support services personnel. [The average annual salary and fringe benefit cost for a school psychologist, counselor, or social worker in the state of Indiana as of May 2022, is approximately \$85,000, \$64,000, and \$59,000 respectively.] Public schools who accept volunteer chaplains may also experience a minor workload increase related to overseeing the volunteer staff. These requirements are within public schools' routine administrative functions and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

Religious Instruction: Provisions in this bill require public schools to assist in coordinating when a student will receive outside religious instruction, if requested by the student's parents. This represents a minor workload increase that is within a public school's routine administrative functions and should be able to be implemented with no additional appropriations, assuming near customary agency staffing and resource levels.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected:

Local Agencies Affected: Public schools.

Information Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics.

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