

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** SB127

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

2. **Patron:** VanValkenburg

3. **Committee:** Finance and Appropriations

4. **Title:** Public school staffing ratios; school counselors; specialized student support positions.

5. **Summary:** Decreases from one to 325 to one to 250 the ratio of full-time equivalent school counselors required to be employed by each local school board per student enrolled in the local school division. The bill also increases the number of specialized student support positions required to be employed by each local school board from at least three to at least four such positions per 1,000 students in the local school division. Such specialized student support positions include school social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, licensed behavior analysts, licensed assistant behavior analysts, and other licensed health and behavioral positions.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 125.

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** This bill would increase the number of school counselors funded by the Standards of Quality (SOQ) from one per 325 students to one per 250 students. The Department of Education estimates that an additional \$62.7 million general fund is required in FY25 and an additional \$63.2 million general fund is required in FY26 to support the state share of the staffing standard.

The bill would also increase the number of specialized student support positions funded by the SOQ from three positions per 1,000 students to four positions per 1,000 students. DOE estimates that an additional \$57.2 million general fund is required in FY25 and an additional \$57.9 million general fund is required in FY26 to support the state share of the staffing standard.

Any additional state cost in outgoing years to support these staffing standards is indeterminate and would be based on the Direct Aid to Public Education budget as rebenchmarked for future biennia.

Local school divisions would have to provide the local share required to match any additional state funds received based on each division's local composite index. The actual fiscal impact to local school divisions is indeterminate at this time.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Local school divisions, Department of Education

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: This bill is similar to HB181 and HB386.