

Department of Planning and Budget 2021 Fiscal Impact Statement

1. **Bill Number:** SB1401

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

2. **Patron:** Pillion

3. **Committee:** Education and Health

4. **Title:** Standards of Learning assessments; reduction; report.

5. **Summary:** Reduces the total number and type of required Standards of Learning assessments to the minimum requirements established by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended. The bill requires the Department of Education to annually report on the estimated projected and actual savings from the implementation of the bill and report the amount of such savings to the Governor and the Chairmen of the House Committee on Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations no later than the first day of each Regular Session of the General Assembly. The bill also requires that such amount be included in the total for Direct Aid to Public Education in any general appropriation act.

6. **Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes, Item 139.

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

8. **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Education (DOE) estimates a state general fund savings of \$1,812,000 in FY 2022 and outgoing years. The bill requires these savings to be redirected to Direct Aid to Public Education. The estimated savings is based upon reduced test administration costs, as this bill would eliminate the following assessments:

History:

- Virginia Studies
- Civics & Economics
- End-of-Course World History to 1500
- End-of-Course World History: 1500 to the Present
- End-of-Course World Geography
- End-of-Course Virginia and United States History

Science:

- End-of-Course Earth Science
- End-of-Course Chemistry

Writing:

- Grade 8 Writing
- End-of-Course Writing

Current law requires each school board to certify annually that it has provided instruction and administered an alternative assessment, consistent with Board guidelines, to students in grades three through eight in each Standards of Learning subject area in which a Standards of Learning assessment was not administered during the school year. As such, this bill would require local school divisions to implement local alternative assessments in place of three eliminated SOL tests at the grade three through eight level: Virginia Studies, Civics & Economics, and Grade 8 Writing. Local school divisions may incur a cost to implement these alternative assessments.

In addition, eliminating the End-of-Course Writing test as a means for students to earn the verified credit in writing needed for graduation would require school divisions to either implement local performance assessments in writing or use a score on a Board-approved substitute test to meet this requirement. Local school divisions may incur a cost to implement these alternative assessments.

DOE can meet the reporting requirement with existing agency resources.

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

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: This bill is similar to HB2094.