

SSB 1065 - Governor's Omnibus Bill

Division I- "Student First Scholarship Program" / VOUCHERS

- Students in all grades are eligible if attending a "school identified for comprehensive support and improvement under the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Pub. L. No. 114-95."
 - Comprehensive schools are identified as schools that score in the lowest 5 percent of Title I schools. There are currently 34 schools in 19 school districts on this list (2020).
- **Estimated Cost: \$50-54 million – much higher than the governor's proposed budget of \$3 million.**
- Creates an account for each student– immediately available for payment of qualified educational expenses– so appropriation will be a moving target, no cap proposed in legislation.
- Unclear on how voucher qualification would change if their resident school is off the ESSA list.
- The unspent funds may be used for in-state Higher Ed expenses until age 23, unless the student goes into active military duty, then one-year credit for each year of service, until the age of 27.
- Qualified educational expenses include:
 - Tuition and fees at nonpublic schools or nonpublic online education programs.
 - Educational therapies including tutoring, vocational and life skills education.
 - Education materials and services for students with disabilities, including costs of paraprofessionals and assistants.
 - AP exams and postsecondary admission exams.
- Explicitly states that the state and local schools may not require a nonpublic school to modify its academic standards to receive payment from parents/guardians under this fund.
- Applies to school and budget years beginning on or after July 1, 2022, which is FY 2023 and tax years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2022.

Division II- Charter School Program Expansion

- Allows a "founding group" to apply for a charter – independent of public-school agreement but state shall be part of the state's program of public education.
- Charter could be within an existing school – or convert an entire school to a charter that operates independently from a public-school district.
- Exempts charters from most state statutes, rules and any local regulation or policy applicable to a public school except for federal and state health and safety, laws prohibiting discrimination. "Oversight" provided by State Board of Education.
- Funding: Resident district of pupil must pay to the charter school the total state cost per pupil, TLC and ELL weighting.

Division III- Eliminates Voluntary Diversity Plans

- Eliminates ability of a school district with a voluntary diversity plan to deny an open enrollment request.
- Eliminates language on development and implementation of voluntary diversity plans.

Division IV- Student Data, Program Standards and Funding

- Development of new statewide system for student records via electronic data and information processing.
- Allows teacher salary supplement to be used in the school district flexibility account if salary obligations are met.
- Allows transfer of TLC funds to flexibility account if all obligations are met.

Division V- Education Tax Credits and Deductions

- Doubles the maximum amount an eligible educator may deduct when computing their income for state tax purposes from \$250 to \$500.
- Tuition and textbook tax credit:
 - Increases the amount of allowed expenses from \$1,000 to \$2,000;
 - Increases the credit from 25% to 50% of eligible expenses;
 - Makes the credit refundable (excess of tax liability returned to the taxpayer);
 - Makes homeschooling/private instruction expenses eligible for the tuition and textbook tax credit.

Division VI – Student Enrollment

- Changes the enrollment determination from enrollment on Oct. 1 to now be the average of the sum of the Oct. determination in April 1st, preceding that Oct. 1. And makes allowances for further enrollment calculations to include special education enrollment by Nov. 1.

Division VII- Open Enrollment

- Expands open enrollment options for districts identified in “significant need of improvement.”
- Transportation - changes law to allow a receiving district to send school vehicles into a contiguous district.
- Establishes “economic eligibility” requirements for the sending district to pay transportation costs to parent or receiving district to minimally include household income of 200% or less of federal poverty level.
- Eliminates 90-day waiting period for athletic eligibility when a student open enrolls.

Division VIII- School Board Powers and Duties

- Amends Chapter 279.1 to include the following new subsection: *“A school corporation is entrusted with public funds for the purpose of improving student outcomes, including but not limited to student academic achievement and skill proficiency, and the board of directors of the school corporation is responsible for overseeing such improvement.”*