

- Districts could see an increase in expenditures from early admissions testing if more parents request that their child be tested.
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Detailed Fiscal Analysis

This bill allows each school district to adopt a resolution to move the admission date for kindergartners and first graders from September 30 to August 1. Under current law, a child must be five years old by September 30 to enter kindergarten and six years old by September 30 to enter the first grade. Currently, school districts may waive this requirement at the request of the parents for children who meet the necessary standards and pass a testing program designated by the board of education. Under the provisions of this bill, a school district can require a child to be five years old by August 1 to enter kindergarten or six years old by the same date to enter first grade.

Fiscal Highlights

The exact cost of implementation is not known at this time, as it is not possible to know how many districts may choose to adopt this change. Participating school districts can expect to see a decrease in enrollment of approximately 1/6th per year. When the date is moved back two months, students who have birthdays during a ten-month, rather than a twelve-month period, are eligible for enrollment. The Department of Education will spend less in per pupil basic aid for the thirteen-year period that the reduced class is in school. Basic aid for school year 2001 will be \$4294 per pupil (\$2147 per pupil in half-day kindergarten). Once the bill is fully implemented, enrollment will return to normal, as will expenditures.

During the implementation phase, participating districts may see a loss in per pupil basic aid revenue. The actual amount lost per district will vary based on enrollment. As affected students move through the grade levels, this cohort will continue to have fewer students than normal. (There are no succeeding years of higher admission to make up for these low enrollment years.) Thus, total enrollment will continue to be lower until this cohort leaves the school system after 13 years.

Participating districts may see a reduction in expenditures because there will be fewer children to service. Larger districts may be able to reduce expenditures by eliminating one or more of the classes that serve the students who entered in FY 2001.

Some districts may see an increase in expenditures if more parents request that their child be tested for early admission to kindergarten. This effect is likely to be more pronounced during the first few years until parents become familiar with the new starting date. After the first few years, this effect should be minor as the number of parents currently requesting early kindergarten admission is relatively low.

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