Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

122 nd General Assembly of Ohio

BILL:	**Sub. S.B. 96 (LSC 122 0891-2)**	DATE:	**May 7, 1997**
STATUS:	**As Reported by Senate Education and Retirement**	SPONSOR:	**Sen. Cupp**

LOCAL IMPACT STATEMENT REQUIRED: **Yes**

CONTENTS: **Requires a study of the shortage of speech-language pathologists; permits issuance of temporary educator licenses in speech-language pathology; allows the Department of Education to contract with licensed speech language pathologists.**

State Fiscal Highlights

STATE FUND	FY 1998	FY 1999	FUTURE YEARS
General Revenue Fund			
Revenues	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Expenditures	Potential increase	Potential increase	Potential increase

- The Department of Education will now be allowed to compensate districts who contract with licensed speech-language pathologists or audiologist for services to the school district.
- The Legislative Office of Education Oversight will conduct a study on the shortage of speech-language pathologists available to treat students in schools.

Local Fiscal Highlights

LOCAL GOVERNMENT	FY 1998	FY 1999	FUTURE YEARS
School districts			
Revenues	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
Expenditures	Potential Increase	Potential Increase	Potential Increase

- After the temporary certification requirements expire in 2002, school districts may only hire and employee individuals as speech-language pathologists or audiologists if that individual is licensed as a speech-language pathology or audiology.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

This bill allows two methods for school districts to fill school audiologist or school speech-language therapist positions. The first measure is temporary, allowing the State Board of Education to issue temporary certification to educators with bachelor's degrees in hearing and speech to provide those services in the district. The second provision allows school districts to contract with private speech-language pathologists or audiologists to provide students service in the district.

Section 3319.223 outlines the conditions under which the temporary certification may be granted or renewed. This temporary certification process expires in 2002, when only those individuals licensed in speech-languagepathology or audiology may provide those services in the schools. A master's degree in the field of speech-language pathology or audiology is one of the requirements for state licensure.

A second provision of the bill is to allow school districts to contract with speech-language pathologists or audiologists to provide student therapy services in the school district. However before a district can seek outside professional services, the district must demonstrate to the Ohio Department of Education that attempts to obtain the services of a speech and language or audiology have been unsuccessful.

The reason for the temporary certification is a shortage of qualified licensed therapists in the state. According to a representative of the Ohio University Hearing and Speech Sciences graduate program, all hearing and speech graduate programs in the state have few positions available in their graduate programs in relation to the number of qualified candidates. Last year at Ohio University alone, 200 candidates applied for 30 positions in the graduate program. Similar circumstances exist at other state universities. The major factor that constrains available positions in a speech-language pathology or audiology graduate program is sponsors for students to complete their practicum. In order to allow more spaces in these programs, the master's program must be able to draw on a larger clinical base for students' practical experience.

The fourth section of the bill requires that the Legislative Office of Education Oversight conduct a study on the shortage of speech-language pathologists available to treat students in schools. The study must be completed by the end of 1998 and shall be submitted to the Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the President of the Senate.

State Fiscal Effects

A representative of the Legislative Office of Education Oversight anticipates no additional cost to conduct the speech-language pathologist shortage study. The representative foresees the costs to conduct such a study to be absorbed within the list of the office's duties.

Local Fiscal Effects

After 2002, only those licensed in speech-language pathology or audiology will be authorized to provide speech and hearing services to the school district. Due to the overall shortage of speech-language pathologists and audiologists in the job market, school districts will have to compete with other employers to attract such individuals to the school system. High demand for qualified personnel will increase the market wage for retaining such therapists. In addition, school systems base teacher salaries on many factors including educational attainment.

Requiring master's degrees in speech-language pathology or audiology and licensure as a qualification for employment will result in higher salary expenditures.

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