Ohio Legislative Service Commission

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: Sub. H.B. 19 of the 128th G.A. **Date**: December 17, 2009

Status: As Passed by the Senate **Sponsor**: Rep. Harwood

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

Contents: Requires schools to adopt a policy to address incidents of dating violence and include dating violence education for grades 7 through 12 within the school's health education curriculum and makes other changes

State Fiscal Highlights

- The bill requires that the State Board of Education update its model policy to prohibit harassment, intimidation, or bullying to include dating violence and that the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) assist school districts in developing a dating violence curriculum by providing links to free dating violence prevention curriculum on its web site. Each of these provisions may result in a minimal increase in administrative costs.

Local Fiscal Highlights

- School district boards of education may incur administrative costs to incorporate dating violence into their policies prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying. School districts may incur one-time minimal costs associated with the printing of new student handbooks or rules and standards of conduct.
- School districts may incur additional costs for developing the curriculum for dating violence prevention training for administrators, teachers, and certain other staff in middle and high schools as part of in-service training already required under continuing law.
- School districts may incur one-time costs to modify their health education curricula to include instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 through 12.
- Fewer community schools may close at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year as a result of a provision that directs ODE to reevaluate each community school for closure under R.C. 3314.35 without considering the school's performance ratings for its first two years.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

Dating violence prevention

The bill requires each school district board of education to incorporate dating violence into their policies prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying; include training on dating violence prevention in the in-service training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development required under continuing law; and include instruction in dating violence prevention education in grades 7 through 12. To help school districts with these requirements, the bill requires the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) to incorporate dating violence into its model policy prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying and to provide links to free dating violence prevention curricula on its web site.

Fiscal effects

The State Board of Education may incur minimal administrative costs to update its model policy to prohibit harassment, intimidation, or bullying to include dating violence. ODE may also incur some minimal costs to update its web site to include links to free dating violence prevention curricula for use by school districts.

School district boards of education may incur some administrative costs incorporating dating violence into their existing policies prohibiting harassment, intimidation, or bullying, including costs associated with the printing of new student handbooks and other publications that are required under continuing law to contain the policy. The bill requires that these policy updates be completed within six months of the bill's effective date. This timing allows districts to wait for the 2010-2011 school year to update their publications, which may mitigate some of the additional costs if the publications are normally updated and printed annually.

The bill requires school districts and educational service centers to develop a curriculum for the training of middle and high school staff in the prevention of dating violence. Continuing law requires administrators, teachers, counselors, school psychologists, and school nurses to complete at least four hours of in-service training in the prevention of child abuse, violence, and substance abuse and the promotion of positive youth development every five years. The bill requires that the prevention of dating violence be included in that training. School districts and educational service centers may incur one-time administrative costs in developing this curriculum.

The bill also requires each district to include in its health education curriculum "age-appropriate instruction in dating violence prevention education" in grades 7 through 12. For a district that currently does not offer this instruction, it may incur one-time costs to modify the district's health education curriculum. However, the links to free curricula to be provided by ODE may help lower these costs. The Liz Claiborne Foundation, in conjunction with the Education Development Center, Inc., provides an

electronic dating violence education curriculum, free of charge, to schools opting to use it. According to Liz Claiborne's "Love Is Not Abuse" web site, as of February 2009, nearly 30 public schools as well as over 20 private schools and community organizations in Ohio are offering this curriculum. In addition, Citizens Against Domestic Violence, an Ohio nonprofit organization, offers a 75-minute assembly to high school students called "Teen Dating Violence 101."

Community school closures

Am. Sub. H.B. 1 of the 128th General Assembly amended R.C. 3314.012 to permit report cards for community schools during the schools' first two years, but to prohibit the ratings on those report cards from being considered in the criteria for automatic closure of the schools under R.C. 3314.35. However, the effective date of this amendment was October 2009, after ODE had evaluated community schools for closure at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year. The bill directs ODE to reevaluate each community school for closure under R.C. 3314.35 without considering the school's performance ratings for its first two years. As a result, fewer community schools may be closed at the conclusion of the 2009-2010 school year.

School bus driver employment

The bill revises the list of criminal offenses that disqualify school bus drivers for employment and requires that ODE amend Rule 3301-83-23 of the Ohio Administrative Code, which also specifies these offenses. After the amended Rule becomes effective, it will govern. This provision has no direct fiscal effect on school districts. ODE's cost to amend the rule is negligible.

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