

Colorado Legislative Council Staff Fiscal Note

**STATE and LOCAL
FISCAL IMPACT**

Drafting Number: LLS 15-0994	Date: March 18, 2015
Prime Sponsor(s): Sen. Hill; Kerr	Bill Status: Senate Education
Rep. Buckner; Wilson	Fiscal Analyst: Josh Abram (303-866-3561)

BILL TOPIC: CHANGES TO ASSESSMENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Fiscal Impact Summary*	FY 2015-2016	FY 2016-2017
State Revenue		
State Expenditures	(\$845,022)	(\$909,022)
General Fund	(\$845,022)	(\$909,022)
FTE Position Change		
Appropriation Required: (\$845,022) - Colorado Department of Education FY 2015-16		

** This summary shows changes from current law under the bill for each fiscal year. Parentheses indicate a decrease in funds.*

Summary of Legislation

This bill implements the consensus recommendations of the Standards and Assessments Task Force created by House Bill 14-1202. Specifically, this bill:

- prohibits the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) from requiring that a local education provider (LEP, i.e., school districts, charter schools, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services) administer a state test to students in eleventh or twelfth grade, but permits a LEP to chose to do so, in which case the CDE must pay for the test(s);
- requires that the CDE make tests in any format available as a pencil and paper test if requested by a LEP;
- requires that each LEP adopt a written policy to allow a parent to choose to have his or her child use a pencil and paper test;
- requires that the CDE continue to administer a standardized curriculum-based college entrance test to students in eleventh grade;
- provides some flexibility to LEPs in the number, frequency, timing, and administration of early reading and school readiness tests;
- repeals specific references to postsecondary and workforce planning, preparation, and readiness tests and clarifies that a student's demonstration of postsecondary readiness is determined in part by scores on high school standardized tests; and
- adjusts the membership and extends for one additional year the HB 14-1202 Standards and Assessments Task Force, with administrative assistance from CDE.

State Expenditures

The bill results in a net reduction in state General Fund expenditures of \$627,478 in FY 2015-16, and a net reduction of \$691,478 in FY 2016-17. Cost components are summarized in Table 1 and described below.

Table 1. Expenditures Under SB 15-215		
Cost Components	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17
Reduced Testing in High School	(\$1,029,022)	(\$1,029,022)
Standards & Assessments Task Force	64,000	0
Pencil and Paper Tests	120,000	120,000
TOTAL	(\$845,022)	(\$909,022)

Parentheses indicate a decrease in funds.

Reduce amount of testing in high school. The bill eliminates one ELA test and one math test in high school. For FY 2015-16, the CDE's budget request assumed that 11th grade ELA assessments would be administered to 54,512 students, and that the 11th grade math assessment would be administered to 20,404 students. This bill eliminates the requirement that the department administer these tests, but allows a LEP to request that the CDE do so. Assuming that 20 percent of school districts request an 11th grade test, total testing is reduced by 43,610 fewer ELA tests at a per-test administrative cost of \$16.87; and reduced by 16,323 fewer math tests at a per-test administrative cost of \$17.97. Total cost savings is \$1,029,022 in both FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17.

Extend the Standards and Assessment Task Force. The bill extends for one year the HB 1202 Task Force. To pay for printing, facility rental, and staff support, the CDE have costs of \$64,000 in FY 2015-16.

Pencil and paper tests. If requested by an LEP, the CDE must make pencil and paper versions of any test available. For FY 2015-16 and FY 2016-17, the CDE will administer ELA and math tests in both online and pencil and paper versions, but social studies and science tests are administered primarily online. For the next two fiscal years, approximately one percent of test takers will use a pen or pencil and paper version of the science and the social studies tests and 99 percent of test takers will take these assessments online. Assuming that the request for a pen or pencil and paper option increases to 20 percent of test takers, the CDE's administrative expense increases by \$120,000 for printing and freight delivery to districts.

School District Impact

The bill increases workload for school districts, charter schools, and BOCES to adopt and implement a policy allowing parents to request pencil and paper testing. The bill also allows an LEP to request that the student responses to the essay portion and appropriate paragraphs released from the ELA test be returned to the LEP by the entity that develops the test. When a LEP makes such a request, the LEP is responsible for all printing and shipping costs.

Pursuant to Section 22-32-143, C.R.S., school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) may submit estimates of fiscal impacts within seven days of a bill's introduction. As of the date of this fiscal note, no summaries of fiscal impacts were submitted by districts or BOCES for this bill. If summaries of fiscal impacts are submitted by districts or BOCES in the future, they will be noted in subsequent revisions to the fiscal note and posted at this address: <http://www.colorado.gov/lcs>

Effective Date

The bill takes effect upon signature of the Governor, or upon becoming law without his signature.

State Appropriations

For FY 2015-16, this bill requires a reduction in state appropriations to the CDE of \$627,478 General Fund.

State and Local Government Contacts

Education

Law