



SOUTH CAROLINA REVENUE AND FISCAL AFFAIRS OFFICE
STATEMENT OF ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT
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This fiscal impact statement is produced in compliance with the South Carolina Code of Laws and House and Senate rules. The focus of the analysis is on governmental expenditure and revenue impacts and may not provide a comprehensive summary of the legislation.

Bill Number:	S. 1108	Introduced on February 28, 2024
Author:	Hutto	
Subject:	Preschool Suspension/Expulsion Language	
Requestor:	Senate Education	
RFA Analyst(s):	Bryant	
Impact Date:	April 15, 2024 - Updated for Additional Agency Response	

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill requires the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE) to provide pre-service and in-service professional development on working with children with challenging behaviors to administrators, teachers, and staff. The bill also requires SCDE to make materials on available resources and working with children with challenging behaviors available to parents and caregivers, and to provide technical assistance to school districts. The bill specifies that before a publicly-funded preschool expels or suspends a child for challenging behavior, the school district or program must first attempt to maintain enrollment. All efforts to maintain enrollment as required by the bill must be documented by public school districts and S.C. First Steps (First Steps).

Further, the bill requires SCDE to collect certain data concerning publicly-funded preschool suspension and expulsion for the current school year and four immediately previous school years and to report this data annually to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children, the Education Oversight Committee (EOC), and the State Board of Education. First Steps must also collect certain data concerning preschool suspension and expulsion for the current school year and report the data annually to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children and EOC.

SCDE indicates that this bill will increase General Fund expenses of the department by \$643,000 in FY 2024-25. Of this amount, \$633,000 is recurring for 5.0 FTEs (one per region) to provide training and ongoing support and professional development for districts, materials and supplies for training the districts, travel expenses, professional development for staff, and resources for the field. Non-recurring funds of \$10,000 are needed in FY 2024-25 for initial training for staff.

SCDE further indicates that the department believes it would be best practice to increase the number of FTEs to 10.0 FTEs (two per region) in order to fully implement the provisions of the bill. This would increase recurring expenses of SCDE by an additional \$612,500 per year beginning in FY 2024-25 for the additional 5.0 FTEs and travel expenses.

First Steps reports that this bill will increase expenses due to the additional work and time required for 4K Coaches to track and maintain documentation of each suspension and expulsion and to report such data to external entities. However, First Steps indicates that the department

can manage the provisions of the bill using existing staff and resource. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on First Steps.

This bill will have no expenditure impact on the School for the Deaf and the Blind. The agency indicates that it can manage the provisions of the bill with existing appropriations. Further, the Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe, the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School do not teach pre-kindergarten and, therefore, will not be impacted by the bill.

The overall expenditure impact of this bill on local school districts will vary. SCDE surveyed the seventy-three regular school districts and three charter school districts and received responses from twenty-five districts. Sixteen of the responding districts indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. Two districts anticipate additional expenses due to program development, professional development, administrative costs, and data management but report that the cost is currently undetermined. The seven remaining districts indicate that implementing the provisions of the bill will increase expenses by an amount ranging from \$750 to \$217,000 beginning in FY 2024-25 for materials and supplies, data processing, and professional development. Two of these districts also anticipate the need to hire additional staff for interventions, assessments, and evaluations.

This impact statement has been updated to include a response from SCDE.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Updated for Additional Agency Response on April 15, 2024

Introduced on February 28, 2024

State Expenditure

This bill requires SCDE to provide pre-service and in-service professional development on working with children with challenging behaviors to administrators, teachers, and staff. The professional development should include but is not limited to the following:

- making administrators, teachers, and staff aware of additional resources available in the community for families with young children who have more intensive needs;
- publicizing the resources available to administrators, teachers, and staff in relation to navigating a child's challenging behaviors and maintaining enrollment; and
- training administrators, teachers, and staff on trauma-informed practices to support children whose challenging behaviors may arise from trauma.

The bill also requires SCDE to make materials on resources and working with children with challenging behaviors available to parents and caregivers. Additionally, SCDE must provide technical assistance to school districts:

- to build internal capacity to provide ongoing support and professional development for preschool classroom teachers;
- to develop and revise existing district Codes of Conduct to acknowledge age-appropriate behavior for preschoolers and to distinguish it from conduct expected of older students; and

- to implement trauma-informed frameworks to support children attending school after or while experiencing trauma.

The bill specifies that before a publicly-funded preschool expels or suspends a child for challenging behavior, the school district or program must first attempt to maintain enrollment. All efforts to maintain enrollment as required by the bill must be documented by public school districts in the student information system as directed by SCDE and by First Steps through systems in use or of its choice as long as the program captures the required documentation, actions, and data.

The bill further requires SCDE to collect certain data concerning publicly-funded preschool suspension and expulsion for the current school year and four immediately previous school years and to report this data annually to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children, EOC, and the State Board of Education. First Steps must also collect certain data concerning preschool suspension and expulsion for the current school year and report the data annually to the Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children and EOC.

S.C. Department of Education. SCDE indicates that this bill will increase General Fund expenses of the department by \$643,000 in FY 2024-25. Of this amount, \$633,000 is recurring for 5.0 FTEs (one per region) to provide training and ongoing support and professional development for districts, materials and supplies for training the districts, travel expenses, professional development for staff, and resources for the field. Non-recurring funds of \$10,000 are needed in FY 2024-25 for initial training for staff.

SCDE further indicates that the department believes it would be best practice to increase the number of FTEs to 10.0 FTEs (two per region) in order to fully implement the provisions of the bill. This would increase recurring expenses of SCDE by an additional \$612,500 per year beginning in FY 2024-25 for the additional 5.0 FTEs and travel expenses.

This section of the impact statement has been updated to include a response from SCDE.

S.C. First Steps. First Steps reports that this bill will increase expenses due to the additional work and time required for 4K Coaches to track and maintain documentation of each suspension and expulsion and to report such data to external entities. However, First Steps indicates that the department can manage the provisions of the bill using existing staff and resource. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on First Steps.

State Agency Schools. This bill will have no expenditure impact on the School for the Deaf and the Blind. The agency indicates that it can manage the provisions of the bill with existing appropriations. Further, the Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe, the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, the Governor's School for Science and Mathematics, and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School do not teach pre-kindergarten and, therefore, will not be impacted by the bill.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

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S.C. Department of Education. The expenditure impact of this bill on SCDE is pending, contingent upon a response.

S.C. First Steps. First Steps reports that this bill will increase expenses due to the additional work and time required for 4K Coaches to track and maintain documentation of each suspension and expulsion and to report such data to external entities. However, First Steps indicates that the department can manage the provisions of the bill using existing staff and resource. Therefore, this bill will have no expenditure impact on First Steps.

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State Revenue

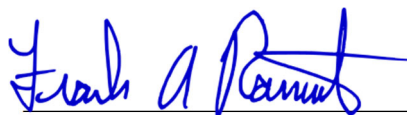
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Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director