



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. 0708	Introduced on January 13, 2026
Subject:	School Flexibility Pilot	
Requestor:	Senate Education	
RFA Analyst(s):	Bryant	
Impact Date:	March 23, 2026	

Fiscal Impact Summary

This bill allows a school district, after approval from the local school district board of trustees, to apply to the S.C. Department of Education (SCDE) for a flexibility waiver allowing deviation from certain statutory and regulatory requirements. The bill also requires districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver to submit an annual report to SCDE. SCDE must compile an annual statewide summary report to be submitted to the General Assembly and develop application procedures, evaluation criteria, reporting requirements, and guidance necessary to implement the provisions of the bill. Additionally, the bill suspends the requirement that teacher contracts be based on 190 days and student attendance be based on 180 days for districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver.

This bill will have no expenditure impact on SCDE. The department indicates that any potential responsibilities that will fall within the scope of SCDE, including creating waiver procedures, reviewing waivers, and supporting districts in implementation, will be accomplished by assigning duties among existing staff and using existing equipment and supplies.

SCDE surveyed the seventy-two regular school districts and three charter school districts and received responses from twelve districts. Six of the responding districts indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. The remaining six responding districts report that the cost of the bill will depend upon the flexibility options requested and whether the flexibility waiver is granted.

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

Introduced on January 13, 2026

State Expenditure

This bill allows a school district, after approval from the local school district board of trustees, to apply to SCDE for a flexibility waiver allowing deviation from certain statutory and regulatory requirements. A district seeking a flexibility waiver must submit an application to SCDE, and the department must approve or deny the application within 90 days of submission. SCDE may approve a district's request for flexibility if the district demonstrates that its proposed plan satisfies certain requirements. The bill also requires districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver to submit an annual report to SCDE. SCDE must compile an annual statewide summary report to be submitted to the General Assembly and develop application procedures,

evaluation criteria, reporting requirements, and guidance necessary to implement the provisions of the bill. Additionally, the bill suspends the requirement that teacher contracts be based on 190 days and student attendance be based on 180 days for districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver.

S.C. Department of Education. This bill will have no expenditure impact on SCDE. The department indicates that any potential responsibilities that will fall within the scope of SCDE, including creating waiver procedures, reviewing waivers, and supporting districts in implementation, will be accomplished by assigning duties among existing staff and using existing equipment and supplies.

State Revenue

N/A

Local Expenditure

This bill allows a school district, after approval from the local school district board of trustees, to apply to SCDE for a flexibility waiver allowing deviation from certain statutory and regulatory requirements. A district seeking a flexibility waiver must submit an application to SCDE, and the department must approve or deny the application within 90 days of submission. SCDE may approve a district's request for flexibility if the district demonstrates that its proposed plan satisfies certain requirements. The bill also requires districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver to submit an annual report to SCDE. Additionally, the bill suspends the requirement that teacher contracts be based on 190 days and student attendance be based on 180 days for districts operating under an approved flexibility waiver.

SCDE surveyed the seventy-two regular school districts and three charter school districts and received responses from twelve districts. Six of the responding districts indicate that the bill will have no expenditure impact. The remaining six remaining responding districts report that the cost of the bill is currently undetermined and will depend upon the flexibility options requested and whether the flexibility waiver is granted.

Local Revenue

N/A



Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director