

OFFICE OF FISCAL ANALYSIS

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sSB-424

AN ACT CONCERNING OVERSIGHT OF PLANS PURSUANT TO SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AND SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS IN THE STATE.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	581,100	131,100
Office of Workforce Strategy	GF - Cost	Up to 100,000	None
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	90,900	90,900
Governmental Accountability, Off.	GF - Cost	86,000	86,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact: None

Explanation

The bill, which makes various changes relating to student plans pursuant to section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 plans), results in the fiscal impacts described by section below.

Sections 1 and 7 result in a one-time cost of \$150,000 in FY 27 to the State Department of Education (SDE) related to collecting and reporting data regarding 504 plans. The funding is required to build systems to integrate data from CT-SEDS (state special education data system) into

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27.

SDE's data warehouse to facilitate the reporting requirements.

Section 2 establishes a working group to review how boards of education are developing and implementing 504 plans, which results in no fiscal impact as the work group has the necessary resources and expertise to fulfil the requirements.

Sections 3 – 5 empower the Office of the Educational Ombudsperson² (OEO) to employ legal staff to conduct hearings, subpoena witnesses, and require depositions, as well as designate OEO to receive complaints related to discrimination against students with IEPs or 504 plans, resulting in a General Fund cost of \$122,000 annually beginning in FY 27.

This cost is associated with hiring one additional position³ within the Office of Governmental Accountability (OGA) and includes an ongoing annual salary cost of \$86,000 and an associated fringe cost of \$36,000 beginning in FY 27. This position is necessary to support the expanded scope of work created with additional legal and investigative responsibilities created by these sections.

Section 6 requires SDE to update the CT-SEDS system to include reporting for various information about students with 504 plans and such 504 plans. This results in a one-time development cost of \$300,000 to SDE in FY 27 to modify the CT-SEDS system for such data collection and integration.

Section 8 requires SDE to provide increased oversight of and coordination with school districts regarding 504 plans, which results in a cost of \$131,100 to SDE and corresponding fringe benefits of \$54,900 annually beginning in FY 27 to hire one full time education consultant.

Section 9 requires SDE to perform a needs assessment of the number of social workers and school counselors required to attain an ideal student to counselor ratio. This has no fiscal impact as SDE is currently

² The Office of the Educational Ombudsperson is currently vacant.

³ This position is a Staff Attorney I.

developing a workload analysis that studies this topic.

Section 10 requires the Department of Social Services to identify and report on Medicaid-eligible school services by December 31, 2026, which results in no fiscal impact as the department already possesses the necessary resources and expertise to fulfill the requirements of the bill.

Section 11 results in a one-time cost of up to \$100,000 in FY 27 only by requiring the Office of Workforce Strategy (OWS) to develop a strategic assessment plan to increase the capacity of school social workers and school counselors in the state. In order to complete this plan by December 31, 2026, OWS will require consulting services which are anticipated to cost up to \$100,000.

The Out Years

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.