

Fiscal Analysis

ELIMINATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS



Bill/Sponsor SENATE BILL 366 (S-1), Sen. Alan Cropsey

House Committee Education

Analysis **Summary**

The Revised School Code requires that the board of each school district, intermediate school district, or public school academy provide at least five days of professional development to its teachers every school year. The bill instead would require that school boards comply with the professional development requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. Under that Act, districts must meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards or spend a portion of their federal aid on professional development. The No Child Left Behind Act does not mandate a particular number of professional development days.

The bill also would eliminate the requirement that, for the first three years of their classroom teaching, new teachers receive at least 15 days of professional development (not including the five described above), experience effective practices in university-linked professional development schools, and attend regional seminars conducted by master teachers and other mentors.

Fiscal Impact

There are no state funds provided specifically to support professional development, and, therefore, this bill has no state fiscal impact. However, if the current requirements are eliminated, school districts would be free to decide the number of days they provide professional development. To the extent that local districts opt to provide fewer than 15 days to new teachers and fewer than 5 days to more experienced teachers, there would be an indeterminate local savings to the district. Some of the savings might include the cost of course materials, enrollment fees, and transportation. The amount of savings from such expenses would vary widely from district to district.

Although the total cost of professional development training is indeterminate, it is possible to estimate the savings attributable specifically to the hiring of substitutes for teachers attending professional development training. The statewide average cost of a substitute teacher on a per-day basis is \$75. An examination of several school calendars found that districts suspend classes in order to accommodate professional development for some of their required

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days. Districts would, of course, not need to pay substitutes for these days. The average number of professional development days on which schools remain open and pay substitute teachers is not known. However, if the average were 2.5 days (half of the total 5 days), a school district could expect to save an estimated \$187.5 per year per teacher who is absent due to professional development training. Based on an estimated 90,000 teachers statewide, the potential savings could reach approximately \$17 million annually on a statewide basis. These estimated savings would be in addition to savings that resulted from professional development training costs and the cost of providing substitutes for 15 days of professional development for new teachers.

Analyst(s)

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