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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 01/25/10

SPONSOR Kernan LAST UPDATED HB

SHORT TITLE Study Various School Calendars SJM 12

ANALYST Pava

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY10	FY11		
	NFI	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to SB 87, SB 92, SB 97

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Public Education Department (PED)

Department of Finance & Administration-Office of Education Accountability (OEA)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 12 requests the Office of Education Accountability to collaborate with PED and various partners to conduct a study of the effects of various school calendars on student learning and achievement, teachers, school operations, and school district budgetary needs. The study report is to be presented to the Legislative Education Study Committee by October 31, 2010.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

There is no appropriation or fiscal impact.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

PED indicates the following:

Studying the impact of various school calendars on student achievement would be a very complex and involved process. Currently, the PED does not formally collect data regarding each district or state-chartered school that makes up lost time due to weather,

unless a waiver is requested. Teacher planning time is not tracked by the PED, nor is the effectiveness of professional development. It may be possible to begin collecting this data formally, but it would take considerable time.

HB 691 - Increase School Year and Length of Day was passed in 2009. The bill amends the Public School Code to require a school year to consist of 180 full instructional days for a regular school year calendar and 150 full instructional days for a variable school year, excluding release time for in-service training. It requires that time lost due to weather, in-service training or other events be made up.

It allows school boards to set a longer school year; and to allow the Secretary of Education to waive the minimum length or number of school days in districts, so long as the school year is adjusted to ensure that students receive the same instructional time as other students in the state. The provisions of this act apply to the 2010-2011 and subsequent school years. The effect of HB 691 is to ensure more instructional time for students.

A study of the impact of current state statutes in light of these issues and in light of federal initiatives to encourage more instructional time for students, maybe very timely.

OEA indicates the following:

Ensuring students receive maximization time spent on direct instruction is critical to student success. The debate over the expansion of standardized testing under No Child Left Behind has often focused around the trade-off of gathering more student achievement data vs. instructional time lost due to testing.

Education Trust has argued that high performing schools organize their calendars to reduce interruptions to instructional time. In a calendar analysis of one school, they found that after accounting for holidays, professional development days, early dismissals, state and district testing, parent conferences, trips, holiday parties, assemblies and concerts that there were only approximately 13-15 eight hour days per subject per year. Education Trust's argument is that schools need to minimize instructional interruptions in order to maximize instruction.

HB 691a - Public School Year & Length of Day passed in the regular session 2009. It requires a minimum number of full instructional days in a school year – 180 in a regular school calendar and 150 in a variable school calendar – beginning in school year 2010-2011. This year's SB 87 would delay the implementation of these requirements by one year, and require the Secretary of Public Education to certify that the new calendar schedule costs could be covered by the State Equalization Guarantee.

OEA would propose to utilize a modified version of the Education Trust's calendar study methodology to ascertain the yield of instructional time from various school calendars. That cumulative yield of instructional time would then be factored against issues of student performance, scheduling practices of teachers, instructional time, budgetary needs and district operations. However, a final research design would need to be put together in consultation with the PED, LESC, school districts, stakeholders and other experts.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

This bill supports the PED’s Public School Performance Measures. It is related to the Governor’s Making Schools Work Task 1.4: Increase the Level of Educational Excellence for All Students.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

PED would have to contract a worker(s) due to the current personnel shortage and hiring freeze in order to accomplish this work.

RELATIONSHIP

Related bills include SB 87, SB 92, and SB 97, which are all focused on the length of the school day and school year.

TECHNICAL ISSUES

A study of the effects of the implementation of HB 691 in the 2010-2011 school year for October 31, 2010 completion would come just two-and-a-half months after full implementation. This timing may not yield significant results. The sponsor may want to consider extending the final report due date to at least the end of the 2010-2011 school year.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

New reporting mechanisms and data collection systems could be a valuable development and outcome of SJM 12.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Other means of determining the effects of executing statute might have to be considered and variable calendars would not be studied or aligned to maximize direct instructional time.

AMENDMENTS

The Office of Education Accountability would propose adding LESC staff to the list of partners outlined in this memorial.

CP/svb