

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE
BILL ANALYSIS**

Bill Number: SB 153

51st Legislature, 2nd Session, 2014

Tracking Number: .195207.1

Short Title: Home School Program Unit Calculations

Sponsor(s): Senator Craig W. Brandt

Analyst: Mark Murphy

Date: February 6, 2014

FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE

Bill Summary:

SB 153 amends the *Public School Finance Act* to incorporate in the program cost calculation, the home school student program unit provisions included in legislation enacted during the 2013 legislative session (technical change).

Among its provisions, the bill:

- includes home school student program units into the program cost calculation as units not to be multiplied by the instructional staff training and experience (T&E) index;
- replaces seven references to the term “home schooled” with “home school” for better readability and consistency with other sections of law; and
- inserts the term “home school” before three references to “students” in order to provide greater clarity.

Fiscal Impact:

SB 153 does not contain an appropriation.

Substantive Issues:

Technical Fix to the Program Cost Calculation Section

SB 153 makes minor technical changes to ensure that the content of Laws 2013, Ch. 113, enacted by the Legislature during the 2013 session, is appropriately and clearly included in the *Public School Finance Act*. Whenever a new category of program units is created, two changes generally must occur within the *Public School Finance Act*, including the need for provisions to:

- 1) generate the new program units; and
- 2) place the new units into the list of units included in the program cost calculation.

The enacted 2013 legislation created a section in the *Public School Finance Act* for the generation of “home schooled student program units,” but it did not, however, place these newly generated units into the program cost calculation. SB 153 makes the technical fixes to place these “home schooled student program units” into the program cost calculation section.

Additionally, the Public Education Department (PED) bill analysis states:

- SB 153 addresses the question of where these units should be placed in the program cost calculation (before or after the T&E) that was not clarified in the original statute.

Wording Changes for Clarity

SB 153 also makes minor modifications to wording in the section generating the “home schooled student program units” for increased clarity.

During the November 2013 interim meeting of the LESC, the sponsor brought an early draft of this clean-up bill and explained the need for it to the committee. In that discussion, a committee member expressed concern about the term “home schooled” that was used in the enacted legislation from the 2013 session. It was suggested that the sponsor look into modifying that term from “home schooled” to “home school.”

One month later, during the December 2013 interim meeting of the LESC, the sponsor provided the committee with an updated discussion draft that had made the recommended modifications. Additionally, at the suggestion of staff from the Legislative Council Service, this draft bill also inserted the term “home school” before two references to “student” in order to provide greater clarity. During that interim committee meeting, the LESC endorsed the language of SB 153.

Background:

Legislation enacted in 2013 as Laws 2013, Ch. 113, added a new section to the *Public School Finance Act* to:

- allow home schooled students to take one or more classes at public schools;
- provide for the calculation of additional program units; and
- take effect beginning with school year 2014-2015.

Among its provisions, the bill:

- specified that the program units are to be calculated by:
 - multiplying the number of enrolled home schooled students by a 0.25 cost differential factor per student per class taken up to the enrollment required for the student to meet the definition of a “qualified student”;
- required that the program units be paid to the school district that operates the school that the eligible students are attending;
- allowed these students to enroll in:
 - a public school in the attendance zone in which the student resides; or
 - another public school outside the attendance zone as provided in *Public School Code* provisions relating to a free public school education and to student enrollment; and
- required a district to verify the academic and other eligibility of each enrolled home schooled student.

Committee Referrals:

SCC/SEC/SFC

Related Bills:

HB 13a *School Equalization Guarantee “Local Revenue”*

HB 19a *Update School Finance At-Risk Index*

HB 35 *Additional Funding Units for Some Schools*

HB 37 *Equalization Distribution to Certain Schools*

HB 122 *Licensed School Employee Program Units*

HB 329 *Home School Testing & Diplomas*

SB 54 *Public School Funding Adequacy*

SB 199 *Vocational Differential in Funding Formula*