

BILL SUMMARY
1st Session of the 52nd Legislature

Bill No.:	HB 1511
Version:	Floor Amendment 2 (Req. 7289)
Author:	Representative Blackwell
Date:	March 5, 2009
Impact:	FY-10: \$1,362,771

Bill Summary

Research Analyst: Michael Hirlinger

The measure modifies the current requirements for grade advancement and high school graduation to include end-of-instruction testing in the field of computer science. The floor substitute for HB 1511 incorporates additional language that:

- allows satisfactory scores on the SAT, ACT, or PSAT to substitute for state assessment tests in order to meet graduation requirements. Specifically, students are required to demonstrate mastery (satisfactory score attainment) in four of eight subject areas or a satisfactory score in each subject area of the ACT, SAT, or the PSAT.
- authorizes technology center schools to provide intervention and remediation to students in Algebra II, Geometry, English II, English III, and U.S. History.
- allows alternative testing methods for students to include WorkKeys and Southern Regional Education Board examinations.

Fiscal Summary

Fiscal Analyst: Nicole Barnes

The Floor Substitute for HB 1511 contains multiple provisions related to school testing. The measure requires the development and administration of a Computer Science end-of-instruction (EOI) test, allows students to demonstrate mastery on four of eight EOIs or achieve a satisfactory score on either the American College Testing Program (ACT), the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Reasoning Test, or the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test in order to graduate from high school with a standard diploma, enables school districts to offer the multiple choice portion of EOIs online if the tests are offered online, provides for additional alternative testing methods, and expands the number of subjects for which technology center districts are authorized to provide remediation.

Fiscal Analysis

Costs associated with the measure relate to developing the Computer Science EOI, paying for students to take the ACT, SAT or PSAT, and scoring of certain EOI components.

Though the measure requires individual districts to develop and administer the Computer Science EOI, the State Department of Education estimates the statewide cost at \$450,000. Costs the first year will cover development and field testing, costs in future years will cover implementation, scoring, and reporting.

The agency is currently unsure of the number of students who would opt to take only the EOIs or one of the other tests mentioned in order to graduate from high school with a standard diploma, and it is uncertain how this change would alter the negotiated testing contract between the agency and the testing company. However, assuming not all students would take either the EOIs or one of the other tests, staff must account for the additional cost of administering the ACT, SAT and PSAT as the agency does not currently pay for such tests. Individual costs for these tests are \$31, \$45, and \$13, respectively; averaging the three brings the cost of one test to \$29.70. If 50% of all students in grade 12 (or 18,948 or 37,897) opt for the ACT, SAT or PSAT, then the agency could incur a maximum additional cost of \$562,771. This figure also assumes the existing EOI testing contract does not change. The agency also notes that the test substitution would suffice for high school graduation requirements, but that the federal government would still require students to take the English I and Algebra I EOIs prior to graduating to meet requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

The remaining component with an associated impact is that which relates to providing districts with a choice to offer multiple choice portions of EOI tests online or not. Giving districts the option could result in some districts opting for paper-and-pencil scoring, and any cost would be borne by the State Department of Education as the administrator of the state's testing contract. Though the end result would depend on the contract negotiated between the agency and the testing company, the agency estimates the additional cost to score this EOI component by paper and pencil at \$350,000.

Remediation language is permissive, and such alternative tests listed in the measure are already being utilized.

Long Term Fiscal Considerations

None

Fiscal Analysis Reviewed By:

Janice Buchanan

House Fiscal Director