



DEPARTMENT OF AUDITS AND ACCOUNTS

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Greg S. Griffin
STATE AUDITOR
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February 21, 2020

Honorable P.K. Martin IV
Chairman, Senate Education and Youth
324-B Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
Senate Bill 343 (LC 49 0087)

Dear Senator Martin:

The bill would increase the age of mandatory school attendance from 16 years of age to 17 years of age.

Increasing the age of mandatory school attendance would cost the state approximately \$15.6 million annually. According to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), 4,644 sixteen-year-olds dropped out of school between the October 2018 FTE count and the October 2019 FTE count. Had these students remained in school for an additional year, the state would provide Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding in the amount of \$4,089 per full-time equivalent student annually. This funding amount includes the QBE base grant plus additional training, experience, and operational costs.

The \$15.6 million cost estimate is determined by multiplying the number of student dropouts (4,644) by the annual QBE earnings per student (\$4,089)¹ and applying the reduction required by the Local Five Mill Share (LFMS) offset (\$3.4 million) to the total. The amount of the LFMS offset for the estimate is determined by dividing the total state LFMS offset (\$1.9 billion) by total state QBE earnings (\$10.6 billion) and then multiplying the result (17.92%) by the total estimated cost for the 4,644 student dropouts (\$19 million). The actual LFMS could be higher or lower depending on the school districts in which the additional 17-year-old students are located.

GaDOE indicated that any increase in enrollment that would result from this bill is not expected to be large enough within any of the state's local school systems to necessitate any immediate capital expenditures.

¹ The QBE funding per student (\$4,089) was calculated using the FY 2019 base grades 9-12 FTE funding. If the students who dropped out were enrolled in programs with higher funding weights (e.g., special education), the actual amount would be higher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Griffin".

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kelly Farr".

Kelly Farr, Director
Office of Planning and Budget

GSG/KF/jb