



DEPARTMENT OF AUDITS AND ACCOUNTS

270 Washington St., S.W., Suite 1-156

Atlanta, Georgia 30334-8400

Greg S. Griffin
STATE AUDITOR
(404) 656-2174

February 9, 2021

Honorable Chuck Payne
Chair, Senate Education and Youth
320-A Coverdell Legislative Office Building
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

SUBJECT: Fiscal Note
Senate Bill 3 (LC 41 2670)

Dear Chairman Payne:

The bill would increase the mandatory school attendance age from 16 years of age to 17 years of age. It would also increase the minimum age for attending adult literacy programs from 16 years of age to 17 years of age.

Increasing the age of mandatory school attendance as required by the bill would have cost the state approximately \$12.7 million in FY 2020, after application of the Local Five Mill Share. According to the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE), 3,612 sixteen-year-olds dropped out of school during the 2019-2020 school year. Had these students remained in school for an additional year, the state would have provided Quality Basic Education (QBE) funding in the amount of \$4,263 per full-time equivalent student annually. This funding amount includes the QBE base grant plus additional training, experience, and operational costs. The \$12.7 million cost of the bill is determined by multiplying the number of student dropouts (3,612) by the annual QBE funding amount per student (\$4,263).¹

It should be noted that the number of sixteen-year-olds who drop out of high school does change from year to year. As a result, the annual fiscal impact of the bill will vary. The analysis for LC 49 0087 (2020 session), a bill that would have raised the mandatory school attendance to 17, found that 4,644 sixteen-year-olds had dropped out during the one-year period reviewed.

The bill will not have a fiscal impact on the Technical College System of Georgia adult literacy program. TCSG reported that approximately 3% of those enrolled in adult literacy programs in FY 2019 were sixteen-year-olds. The reduction in a relatively small number of individuals would not result in a meaningful reduction in program costs.

¹ The QBE funding per student (\$4,263) was calculated using the base grade 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 that reads "Greg S. Griffin".

Greg S. Griffin
State Auditor

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Farr".

Kelly Farr, Director
Office of Planning and Budget

GSG/KF/ch