
Appropriations Subcommittee on Education

HB 2715

Brief Description: Aligning student transportation formulas with 2013 session laws.

Sponsors: Representatives Robinson, Appleton and Van De Wege; by request of Office of Financial Management.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Aligns the statutory pupil transportation funding formula to reflect the full funding and implementation of the system, effective September 1, 2014,
- Provides a funding formula implementation for the first year of operation of schools that are the subject of a state-tribal education compact.
- Requires schools that are the subject of a state-tribal education compact to meet certain transportation safety, reporting, and school bus operation requirements.

Hearing Date: 2/6/14

Staff: Jessica Harrell (786-7349).

Background:

Legislation enacted in 2009 and 2010 authorized a new pupil transportation funding formula and directed the Legislature to fully implement the new funding formula by the 2013-15 biennium. The Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System (STARS) is an expected cost formula used for the distribution of operations funding for school district transportation and for providing an evaluation of relative efficiency. The Student Transportation Allocation Reporting System formula uses a regression analysis of various, statistically significant school district characteristics to determine an estimate for the expected allocation necessary to fund the expenditures for each school district's transportation operations. The 2013-15 enacted operating budget allocated sufficient funding to fully implement the expected cost pupil transportation funding formula beginning in the 2014-15 school year.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Chapter 242, laws of 2013 (E2SHB 1134) authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) to enter into a state-tribal education compact with the governing body of any tribe or the governing body of any school currently receiving funding from the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. The SPI is required to apportion funding for a compact school according to the same schedule in which district allocations are apportioned. Allocations for schools that are the subject of a state-tribal education compact include general apportionment, special education, categorical and nonbasic education funds.

Summary of Bill:

Effective the first day of the 2014-15 school year, the pupil transportation funding formula is revised to reflect full funding and implementation of the expected cost model.

It is specified that the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction is authorized to pay for the transportation of students enrolled in a school that is the subject of a state-tribal education compact. During the initial year of operation a state-tribal compact school funding is calculated based on a per-student allocation of a school district with similar geography and ridership, adjusting for any federal funds received for the purpose of transporting students. Beginning in the second year of operation, state-tribal compact schools' transportation funds are allocated based on the expected cost formula in the same manner as a school district.

State-tribal compact schools are required to adhere to the same safety rules for bus routes on a highway, bus driver training, and standards for buses as a school district. Additionally, state-tribal compact schools may claim school bus depreciation funds.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on September 1, 2014.