

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5312

As of January 21, 2019

Title: An act relating to appropriations for special education programs.

Brief Description: Concerning appropriations for special education programs.

Sponsors: Senators Wellman and Kuderer; by request of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 1/23/19.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Replaces the special education excess cost multiplier of 0.9609 with a tiered-multiplier based on weekly minutes of service and service environment.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Staff: Alex Fairfortune (786-7416)

Background: Special Education Excess Cost Multiplier. The state allocates funding for a program of special education for students with disabilities. Special education is funded on an excess cost formula for up to 13.5 percent of a district's students. This formula multiplies the district's base allocation for students enrolled in special education by an excess cost multiplier of 0.9609.

Least Restrictive Environment. Under federal law, districts are required to provide special education services in the least restrictive environment, which is the setting that is closest to the general education classroom that still allows a student to access an appropriate education from which they can benefit. The continuum of placement options available includes general education classes with or without support services, a combination of general education and special education classes, self-contained special education classes, home instruction, and residential care or treatment facilities.

Summary of Bill: Special education excess costs are calculated based on a tiered-multiplier system, rather than a fixed multiplier of 0.9609. Multipliers are assigned to bands based on

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the weekly minutes of special education services and the service environment, aligned with federally reported least restrictive environment designations. Each month, districts must report the sum of special education services, related services, and supplemental aids and supports by weekly minutes for each individualized education program.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 16, 2019.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.