

**LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE  
BILL ANALYSIS**

**Bill Number:** SB 209

**50th Legislature, 2nd Session, 2012**

**Tracking Number:** .188225.1

**Short Title:** School District Financial Flexibility

**Sponsor(s):** Senator Vernon D. Asbill and Others

**Analyst:** James Ball

**Date:** January 31, 2012

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**FOR THE LEGISLATIVE EDUCATION STUDY COMMITTEE**

**Bill Summary:**

SB 209 amends the *Public School Code* to:

- extend through school year 2012-2013 a temporary provision that allows the Secretary of Public Education to waive requirements in law and the Public Education Department (PED) rule relating to:
  - individual class load;
  - teaching load;
  - length of school day;
  - staffing patterns;
  - subject areas; and
  - purchases of instructional materials.

The bill also requires PED to monitor such waivers and report to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) and the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) on any matters that appear to adversely affect student learning.

**Fiscal Impact:**

SB 209 does not contain an appropriation.

**Substantive Issues:**

According to PED, the primary benefit to school districts of SB 209 will be the waiver of individual class loads and teaching load requirements. These waivers may allow districts that are experiencing enrollment growth to maintain current staffing levels when they would otherwise be required to hire additional teachers.

## **Background:**

### **Waivers Allowable in Current Law**

Current provisions in the *Public School Code*:

- allow a superintendent implementing a collaborative school improvement program to apply for a waiver of provisions relating to length of day, staffing patterns, subject area, or purchase of instructional material;
- exempt all charter schools from requirements pertaining to the length of the school day, staffing patterns, subject areas, and instructional materials; and
- provisions in the *Instructional Material Law* allow school district superintendents to request waivers of the use of funds for the purchase of instructional material either included or not included on the multiple list.

In the 2009 special session, legislation was enacted to add a temporary provision in the *Public School Code* for school year 2009-2010 through school year 2011-2012 to allow the Secretary of Public Education to waive requirements pertaining to:

- individual class load;
- teaching load;
- length of school day;
- staffing patterns;
- subject areas; and
- purchases of instructional materials.

PED was also required to monitor the waivers and report to the LESC and the LFC on any issues or actions of a school district that appear to adversely affect student learning.

## **Related Bills:**

SB 205 *School District Financial Flexibility*