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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/7/15
 LAST UPDATED 2/20/15 HB _____

SPONSOR Sapien

SHORT TITLE Public Education Data Advisory Council SB 202/aSEC/aSFI#1

ANALYST Chavez

ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL OPERATING BUDGET IMPACT (dollars in thousands)

	FY15	FY16	FY17	3 Year Total Cost	Recurring or Nonrecurring	Fund Affected
Total		See Fiscal Impact				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From
 Public Education Department (PED)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of SFI Amendment #1

The Senate Finance Committee Amendment #1 to Senate Bill 202 adds that the council will also report to the Public Education Department (PED) as well as to LESC and LFC on the accuracy and validity of data and calculations used for school grades and teacher evaluations and on any recommendations for the department or the legislature in December meetings.

Synopsis of SEC Amendment

The Senate Education Committee Amendment to Senate Bill 202 replaces “majority floor leader” with “president pro tempore”.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Bill 202 creates a new seven-member advisory council to review and advise on the accuracy and validity of data and calculations used for school grades and educator evaluations. Members of the data council would be comprised of the director of assessment and

accountability for PED, four statistical experts appointed by Senate and House leaders, one LESC member appointed by the LESC director, and one LFC member appointed by the LFC director.

The department is required provide the council any data, calculations or related information, used in the calculations of school grades and educator evaluations upon request of the council; provided that any student- or teacher-level information reviewed by the council remain confidential.

The council will report to LESC and LFC in December meetings.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

This bill does not contain an appropriation.

There may additional costs depending on administrative, travel, and other costs, but these costs should be minimal.

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

In recent years, PED has made changes to how both schools and teachers are assessed. In 2012, the department began giving schools grades based on a number of factors. A new teacher evaluation program, NMTeach, was implemented in the 2013-2014 school year. Both models use technical models and data to create grades (for schools) and ratings (for teachers). One use of data to assess a teacher is through value-added-models (VAMs), which use data from students' past test scores to predict subsequent scores and then subtracts that prediction from current year scores to provide an estimate for teachers. This estimate is the "value added" and the models themselves can range from simple statistical procedures to more complex, multi-level models. Models can be run in basic statistical software, but more complex models require custom programming of statistical formulas.

Over the interim, LESC hosted a series of panels with district superintendents and charter schools to discuss their experiences with the new teacher evaluation program. A consistent criticism of the evaluation system from the superintendents was that the VAM aspect of the evaluations was confusing to understand and often inconsistent. These findings were consistent with a November 2012 LFC evaluation, which found that VAMs can produce statistically different results depending on the model used and how they are implemented. In public hearings, stakeholders have noted that the VAM model implemented by PED is neither clear to understand nor has its methodology been transparent.

PED notes they have provided expert testimony before the LESC and LFC on both the school grade and educator evaluation models, particularly during their developmental phases. PED adds the two accountability systems are now fully developed and established and therefore changing very little, so a formal advisory council may not be able to provide material information.

PED asserts that the current A-F school grading system was developed with several groups advising and providing feedback; these groups are continuing their work as new information is learned. Groups involved include the U.S. Department of Education; Superintendent's Advisory Council meetings on the development of the A-F regulation and model; regional School Board

Association meetings to present the model, answer questions, and receive feedback; and a technical working group on the A-F school grading system. Notably, while the Legislature has held hearings on the school grading system and the teacher evaluation system, members have not been regularly included in developing either.

PED adds there are a number of resources for schools to understand school grades: the school grading workbook is a modeling program that allows users to estimate the impact of certain school reforms or student interventions on a future school grade. Additionally, PED's website has school grading FAQ, which provides an explanation of each component of school grading, and a school grading technical working group has now extended its work to educator effectiveness. However, these resources are used to understand the existing system as it is, and not to understand or ensure the efficacy and accuracy of the underlying technical components of the program. Given the high stakes nature of school grades and teacher evaluations, and the extremely technical nature of how the data is evaluated and analyzed, a data council, if implemented, could provide technical expertise outside of PED to ensure that all stakeholders have an understanding of these data-driven processes.

KC/bb/aml