

COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH
OVERSIGHT DIVISION

FISCAL NOTE

L.R. No.: 2601H.01I
Bill No.: HB 1360
Subject: Education, Elementary and Secondary; Elementary and Secondary Education,
Department of; Disabilities
Type: Original
Date: April 5, 2021

Bill Summary: This proposal establishes the "BRITE" Act governing braille instruction.

FISCAL SUMMARY

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE FUND			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
General Revenue	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)
Total Estimated Net Effect on General Revenue	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON OTHER STATE FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>Other</u> State Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Numbers within parentheses: () indicate costs or losses.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FEDERAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on <u>All</u> Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE)			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Total Estimated Net Effect on FTE	0	0	0

- ☐ Estimated Net Effect (expenditures or reduced revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.
- ☐ Estimated Net Effect (savings or increased revenues) expected to exceed \$250,000 in any of the three fiscal years after implementation of the act or at full implementation of the act.

ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON LOCAL FUNDS			
FUND AFFECTED	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024
Local Government	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

FISCAL ANALYSIS

ASSUMPTION

Section 167.225 BRITE Act

Officials from the **Department of Elementary and Secondary Education** state the Missouri School for the Blind already provides many of the services required in this legislation with the exception of orientation and mobility evaluations at the home and paying for eye exams. To implement this legislation, the Department estimates the following costs per year:

6.(3)(c) - The orientation and mobility evaluations described in paragraph (b) of this subdivision shall occur in familiar and unfamiliar environments and around the home, school, and community as determined age appropriate by the blind students IEP.

40 students X 500 miles X .43 mileage rate = \$8,600

9. (1) - If an LEA requires an eye report, the LEA shall bear all costs associated with obtaining such report. LEAs shall not delay an evaluation for eligibility based on the absence or delay of such report.

40 students X \$300 eye exam = \$12,000

Total Cost = \$20,600

Officials from the **Department of Social Services** assume the proposal will have no fiscal impact on their organization. **Oversight** does not have any information to the contrary. Therefore, Oversight will reflect a zero impact in the fiscal note for this agency.

Oversight assumes this proposal could result in additional costs to school districts if it imposes duties beyond those that school district is already performing. Oversight will show a range of impact to school districts of \$0 (no additional costs or can be absorbed) to an unknown cost.

Oversight did not receive any responses from school districts related to the fiscal impact of this proposal. Oversight has presented this fiscal note on the best current information available. Upon the receipt of additional responses, Oversight will review to determine if an updated fiscal note should be prepared and seek the necessary approval to publish a new fiscal note.

Oversight only reflects the responses that we have received from state agencies and political subdivisions; however, other school districts were requested to respond to this proposed legislation but did not. A general listing of political subdivisions included in our database is available upon request.

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – State Government</u>	FY 2022 (10 Mo.)	FY 2023	FY 2024
GENERAL REVENUE			
<u>Costs</u> - orientation and mobility evaluations and eye reports - §167.225	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON GENERAL REVENUE	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)	(\$20,600)

<u>FISCAL IMPACT – Local Government</u>	FY 2022 (10 Mo.)	FY 2023	FY 2024
SCHOOL DISTRICTS			
<u>Costs</u> - orientation and mobility evaluations and instruction, eye reports, duplicative accessible assistive technology - §167.225	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)
ESTIMATED NET EFFECT ON SCHOOL DISTRICTS	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)	\$0 or (Unknown)

FISCAL IMPACT – Small Business

No direct fiscal impact to small businesses would be expected as a result of this proposal.

FISCAL DESCRIPTION

This bill establishes the "Blind Students' Rights to Independence, Training, and Education Act" or the "BRITE Act".

The bill provides definitions for "accessible assistive technology device", "adequate instruction", and "nonvisual access and skills" among other definitions.

The bill requires blind children to have an Individualized Education Plan, (IEP) that shall specify results obtained from evaluations on reading and writing skills, and should include the need for instruction in Braille or the use of Braille. All instruction in Braille reading and writing shall be sufficient to allow a student to effectively and efficiently communicate at an appropriate age level.

The bill includes additional guidance for the instruction of Braille and the use of nonvisual accessible assistive technology. The bill provides direction to school districts regarding accessible assistive technology and requires a school district to provide duplicative accessible assistive technology to be used in a blind student's home without requiring payment or family assumption of liability for loss or damage.

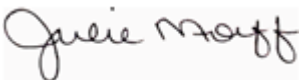
The bill requires districts to perform an orientation and mobility evaluation to be conducted by certified individuals and provides guidance on the instruction for orientation and mobility, and districts may not limit a student's instruction in the home, school, or community and provide transportation in the preferred mode of the instructor.

The bill requires educators hired to teach Braille, accessible assistive technology, and orientation and mobility, to hold a valid certificate as outlined in the bill. The bill requires school districts to comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) even during declared emergencies, to bear the cost of any required eye report, and to develop nonvisual accessibility policies to reduce or eliminate common barriers for the blind.

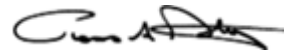
This legislation is not federally mandated, would not duplicate any other program and would not require additional capital improvements or rental space.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Department of Social Services



Julie Morff
Director
April 5, 2021



Ross Strobe
Assistant Director
April 5, 2021