

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS
FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

LS 6953

BILL NUMBER: HB 1266

NOTE PREPARED: Feb 23, 2026

BILL AMENDED: Feb 23, 2026

SUBJECT: Department of Education and Education Matters.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Behning

FIRST SPONSOR: Sen. Raatz

BILL STATUS: 2nd Reading - 2nd House

FUNDS AFFECTED: X GENERAL
X DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: (Amended) This bill makes various changes to education provisions concerning the following:

- (1) Creating and updating a list of employers that have agreed to provide career support for or interview Indiana residents who graduate with an Indiana diploma with an employment honors plus seal.
- (2) Creating a teaching and learning framework for the implementation of mathematics academic standards.
- (3) Development of a data science math pathway.
- (4) Submission of a report to the General Assembly concerning recommendations on strategies to support academically and fiscally underperforming schools, and interventions as necessary.
- (5) Evaluating, approving, and publishing high quality curricular materials time lines.
- (6) Local board membership for a local centralized school facilities board and local student transportation board.
- (7) Salary differentiation regarding teachers who possess a literacy endorsement.
- (8) Amounts expended in participating in an interlocal agreement included in determining amounts school corporations expend on full-time teacher salaries for purposes of teacher salary minimum funding requirements.
- (9) Summer School Program and reimbursement administration.
- (10) Criteria required for eligibility of a waiver for conducting four day school weeks.
- (11) Oversight of Career and Technical Education Program designation.
- (12) Uses of Teacher Appreciation Grants.
- (13) The calculation of operating referendum distributions and school safety referendum distributions to charter schools with regard to virtual instruction.
- (14) Petitions regarding reconsidering payments of Choice Scholarships.
- (15) Eligibility for Teacher Appreciation Grants by the Department of Correction.
- (16) Membership of the Board for Proprietary Education.
- (17) The effective date regarding the changes to the definition of "eligible Choice Scholarship student".
- (18) Career specialist permit eligibility.

The bill also provides that an emergency permit may be renewed up to two times to an individual enrolled in an alternative teacher certification program if the program provides documentation verifying the individual's good standing in the program to the Department of Education.

The bill creates a new qualification option for a Transition to Teaching Program participant who seeks to obtain a license to teach in grades 5 through 12.

The bill removes a provision that provides that the department may not release less than 10 items per subject matter level per grade level regarding the statewide summative assessment.

It also removes a requirement that for a parent or student to use a Career Scholarship Account (CSA) annual grant amount for costs related to transportation a CSA participating entity must pay a matching amount for the transportation costs.

The bill repeals certain provisions concerning postsecondary career and technical education.

The bill also requires each state educational institution that offers a two year graduate degree program in mental or behavioral health to evaluate the graduate degree program to determine the feasibility of providing the program in a specifically structured manner to allow full-time students to complete the program within: (1) one year; or (2) five years if the program is combined with a baccalaureate degree program.

Effective Date: Upon passage; July 1, 2026.

Explanation of State Expenditures: *Transition to Teaching:* The bill expands the eligibility criteria under which an individual may qualify for a Transition to Teaching permit. This could increase the amount awarded through the Transition to Teaching Scholarship, dependent on available funding in the Next Generation Hoosier Educators Scholarship (Next Gen).

Summer School: The bill transfers certain responsibilities regarding summer school from the State Board of Education to DOE. Total state expenditures would not be impacted.

(Revised) *Workload Impacts:* The bill has various provisions that would result in minor workload increases for DOE and certain state educational institutions and minor workload decreases for the Commission for Higher Education and the State Board of Education. Agency staffing and resource needs would not be impacted.

Additional Information -

Transition to Teaching: The Transition to Teaching scholarship awards recipients up to \$10,000 to pay for their tuition at a Transition to Teaching program. Existing statute allows no more than \$1 M of the Next Gen fund may be used to provide Transition to Teaching scholarships unless excess money remains in the Next Gen fund once scholarships have been awarded. In FY 2025, the Commission for Higher Education allocated \$2.67 M towards funding 267 Transition to Teaching scholarships. However, the maximum amount of Transition to Teaching scholarships fluctuates from year to year, dependent upon legislative and administrative actions.

Explanation of State Revenues: *Career Scholarship Accounts (CSA):* Current law requires that a CSA participating entity provide a matching amount for transportation costs in order for a CSA student to use CSA

funds to pay for transportation. The bill's removal of that requirement could increase the utilization of money in student accounts. Upon termination of a student's CSA, money remaining in the account is reverted to the General Fund. If the bill increases utilization of CSA funds, it could reduce reversions to the General Fund beginning in FY 2027.

In FY 2025, transportation expenditures from CSAs totaled about \$360,000. Around 33% of account holders utilized CSA funds to pay for transportation costs. CSA reversions were about \$0.8 M in FY 2025, according to the Treasurer of State.

Teacher Licensing: The Professional Standards Fund will experience a revenue increase of \$36.72 for each additional license and permit reviewed by DOE as a result of the bill's provisions.

Explanation of Local Expenditures: *Teacher Licensing:* If the number of teachers issued licenses increases as a result of the bill's provisions, schools may also be able to fill vacant positions.

Teacher Appreciation Grants (TAG): Under the bill, schools can choose to use part of their Teacher Appreciation Grants (TAG) to pay for the Federal Insurance Contributions Act and the Indiana Teachers' Retirement Fund costs associated with awarding TAG stipends.

Explanation of Local Revenues: *School Safety Referendum:* The bill's removal of virtual ADM in the calculation used to determine how certain school safety referendum revenue is distributed would not impact any current school safety referendums. Revenue distributions for a school safety referendum would only be impacted if both of the following conditions were met:

1. The school safety referendum is brought by a school corporation located within Lake, Marion, St. Joseph, or Vanderburgh counties.
2. The referendum passes in 2026 with taxes first due and payable in 2027.

State Agencies Affected: Department of Education; Commission for Higher Education; State Board of Education; State educational institutions.

Local Agencies Affected: Public schools.

Information Sources: Department of Education; Commission for Higher Education; Treasurer of State. Department of Education: 2022-2023 Annual Licensing Report, <https://www.in.gov/doe/files/2022-2023-IDOE-Annual-Licensing-Report.pdf>. Legislative Services Agency: *Indiana Handbook of Taxes, Revenues, and Appropriations*, FY 2025;

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