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# OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research  
and Drafting

Legislative Budget  
Office

H.B. 683  
133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

## Bill Analysis

**Version:** As Introduced

**Primary Sponsor:** Rep. Perales

Mike Niemi, Research Analyst

### SUMMARY

- Establishes a state scholarship program to pay tuition for children of full-time U.S. military service members to attend chartered nonpublic schools or school districts other than their resident school districts.
- Specifies that a scholarship amount for a student must equal the lesser of either the district's or school's tuition or (1) \$6,000 for students enrolled in grades K-8 or (2) \$10,000 for students enrolled in grades 9-12.
- Requires the Department of Education to pay for a scholarship by deducting from a scholarship recipient's resident school district an amount equal to the student's scholarship amount times the resident district's state share index and to pay for the remainder of the scholarship through an appropriation by the General Assembly.
- Requires chartered nonpublic schools that enroll scholarship students to annually administer state achievement assessments and end-of-course exams to scholarship students, except as otherwise required under continuing law.
- Makes an appropriation.

### DETAILED ANALYSIS

#### Scholarships for children of military service members

The bill requires the Department of Education to pay scholarships for children of full-time U.S. military service members to attend chartered nonpublic schools or school districts in which the children enroll as nonresident students. The State Board of Education must adopt rules prescribing procedures for awarding the scholarships, including the form and manner in which students may apply. A scholarship only may be used to pay tuition to the district or school in which a student enrolls. A student who receives a scholarship remains eligible for it,

and may continue to receive it in subsequent school years, until the student completes 12<sup>th</sup> grade or turns 22 years old.<sup>1</sup>

### **Payment and amount of scholarships**

The Department must pay a scholarship annually to the parent of each eligible student for whom a scholarship is awarded, or to the student if the student is at least 18 years old, in periodic payments. However, the Department must proportionately reduce or terminate the payments for any student who withdraws from a chartered nonpublic school.

The amount of a scholarship must equal:

1. For students enrolled in grades K-8, the lesser of \$6,000 or the amount of tuition of the district or school;
2. For students enrolled in grades 9-12, the lesser of \$10,000 or the amount of tuition owed to the district or school.<sup>2</sup>

### **Financing of scholarships**

The bill specifies that, to pay for a scholarship, the Department must deduct from the resident school district of a student who qualifies for a scholarship an amount equal to the student's scholarship amount times the state share index of the student's resident district. The remainder of the scholarship amount must be paid using funds appropriated by the General Assembly.

The state share index is an index based on valuation and, for districts with relatively low median income, on median income. It is used in the calculation of certain funding payments to school districts.

Under the bill, if the Department reduces or terminates payments to a parent or a student and the student enrolls in the student's resident district, a community school, or a STEM school before the end of the school year, the Department must proportionally restore to the resident district the amount deducted for that student.<sup>3</sup>

### **Require administration of state assessments**

The bill requires chartered nonpublic schools that enroll scholarship students annually to administer the state achievement assessments, high school end-of-course exams, and any other assessments required for graduation to those students and to report the results to the Department. However, a chartered nonpublic school is not required to administer state assessments to its other students except as otherwise required under continuing law. Furthermore, a chartered nonpublic school that qualifies for an exemption from administering

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<sup>1</sup> R.C. 3310.31(A), (B)(3) and (4), and (E).

<sup>2</sup> R.C. 3310.31(A) and (B)(1) and (2).

<sup>3</sup> R.C. 3310.031(A), (B)(2), and (C) and 3317.03.

elementary assessments under continuing law is not required to administer those assessments under the bill.<sup>4</sup>

### **Data verification codes**

As is the case with other state scholarship programs, the bill permits the Department to request the data verification codes of students applying for scholarships established by the bill from (1) those students' resident school districts, (2) a community school in which a student is enrolled, or (3) the independent contractor hired by the Department to create and maintain the codes. This authority, which is an exception to the general prohibition against the Department's having access to data verification codes when they could be matched with personally identifiable student data, is limited solely to administering the scholarship programs. School districts and community schools must provide a student's data verification code to the Department or the student's parent, upon request, in a manner specified by the Department. If a student will be entering preschool or kindergarten and has not yet been assigned a data verification code, the resident school district must assign a code to the student prior to submission. If the district does not assign the code by a date specified by the Department, the Department must assign the code. Each year, the Department must provide school districts with the name and data verification code of each scholarship student living in the district who has been assigned a code by the Department.

Neither the Department nor a provider may release a student's data verification code to any person, unless such release is otherwise authorized by law. The bill specifies that materials containing both a student's name or other personally identifiable data and the student's data verification code are not public records. Other documents relative to the scholarship program that are held by the Department are public records, but may be released only in accordance with state and federal privacy laws.<sup>5</sup>

### **Appropriation**

The bill appropriates \$5,750,000 in fiscal year 2021 to provide the state share of scholarship payments.<sup>6</sup>

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## **HISTORY**

| Action     | Date     |
|------------|----------|
| Introduced | 06-01-20 |

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<sup>4</sup> R.C. 3310.31(D), conforming changes in R.C. 3301.0711 and 3301.0714.

<sup>5</sup> R.C. 3310.311, conforming change in R.C. 3301.0714.

<sup>6</sup> Sections 265.10 and 265.210 of H.B. 166 of the 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly (as amended by S.B. 120 of the 133<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly) amended in Section 3 of the bill.