



OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

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Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

Bill: H.B. 544 of the 132nd G.A.

Status: As Introduced

Sponsor: Reps. Rogers and Perales

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: Yes

Subject: School safety enhancements

State & Local Fiscal Highlights

- The bill may increase public school construction costs by requiring new school facilities to incorporate safety enhancement standards to be developed by the State Board of Education. Costs for new classroom facilities included in state-assisted projects are shared by the state and school districts depending on the district's relative wealth.
- It is also possible that any new costs to implement the safety enhancements are accounted for in the design phase of a project so as not to increase a project's overall cost.

Detailed Fiscal Analysis

The bill requires the State Board of Education, not later than 90 days after the bill's effective date, to adopt rules prescribing safety standards for use in the construction of new school facilities for public and nonpublic schools. These standards must consist of design provisions to enhance the overall safety and well-being of students and staff. The standards also must require that new schools include at least two of the following six safety enhancements and must expressly permit new schools to include more than two of those enhancements:

- Surveillance video;
- Entryway metal detectors;
- Direct entrance and exit routes located within a classroom, which may only be accessed from inside that classroom;
- An effective means of communication between classrooms and the administrative offices;
- A real-time notification device located within a classroom, such as a panic button, to alert local law enforcement when a staff member encounters a dangerous situation; and

- A means of threat containment, which may include a barrier system to lock down the portion of the building wherein a threat has been identified.

The requirement to include at least two safety enhancements may increase public school construction project costs beyond a minimal amount, depending on the enhancements chosen. However, it is also possible that any such costs may be accounted for in the design phase of the project so as not to increase the overall cost of the project. How these costs are incorporated into the total cost for state-assisted projects will ultimately be determined by negotiations between the Ohio Facilities Construction Commission (OFCC) and the school district.

An increase in new construction costs to implement the security enhancements in state-assisted facilities projects will be shared by the state and school districts. Most school facilities assistance is provided to school districts through the Classroom Facilities Assistance Program (CFAP), which addresses the entire classroom facilities need of a district. Under CFAP, a district's portion of the total project cost and priority for funding depends on the district's relative wealth. Lower wealth districts are funded before higher wealth districts and receive a larger percentage of their total project funding from the state. As a point of reference, 137 districts (21%) had not yet been offered CFAP funding and another 131 (20%) had been offered funding but had not yet accepted it as of the end of FY 2017. In contrast, 276 (42%) districts statewide have completed projects that fully addressed their facilities' needs through CFAP and another 115 (17%) districts have buildings in the design or construction phase or had some work performed through another OFCC program.

Additionally, the administrative responsibilities of the Ohio Department of Education will increase to assist the State Board in the development of the safety standards. OFCC's administrative responsibilities will increase to revise the classroom facilities construction and design standards to comply with the new rules.