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OHIO LEGISLATIVE SERVICE COMMISSION

Office of Research
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Legislative Budget
Office

H.B. 239
133rd General Assembly

Fiscal Note & Local Impact Statement

[Click here for H.B. 239's Bill Analysis](#)

Version: As Referred by House Rules and Reference

Primary Sponsors: Reps. G. Manning and Crawley

Local Impact Statement Procedure Required: No

Dan Redmond, Budget Analyst

Highlights

- The bill's changes to testing requirements, once fully phased in, may reduce GRF expenditures for state tests by \$5.1 million to \$7.1 million each fiscal year.
- School districts may incur minimal administrative costs to form testing work groups that will examine testing and report its findings and recommendations for testing reductions to the district board of education within six months after formation.

Detailed Analysis

The bill reduces the number of high school end-of-course examinations, makes optional the college admissions tests that are generally mandatory for all eleventh grade students, and requires school districts to form a work group to study current testing practices with the goal of recommending testing reductions. Please refer to [LSC's bill analysis](#) for more detailed provisions on the eliminated tests and the requirements of the district testing work groups.

Certain end-of-course examinations eliminated

The bill reduces the number of high school end-of-course examinations required to be taken as part of the state's College and Work Ready Assessment System for high school students from seven to three, meeting the federally required minimum level of one test each in mathematics, English language arts, and science. These changes would go into effect for students entering ninth grade on or after July 1, 2018 (the Class of 2022). The bill removes the English language arts I, geometry, American history, and American government end-of-course examinations, which, once fully phased in, will reduce GRF-supported state testing costs by about \$5.1 million each year. Until that point, the actual savings may be somewhat less depending on high school courses of study. For example, while the Class of 2022 would no longer take the American history and American government end-of-course examinations, earlier classes would still be required to take the test, perhaps during FY 2020 or FY 2021

(depending on the district's course of study), before graduating. Table 1 below shows the estimated, fully phased-in savings of eliminating each assessment, according to information supplied by the Ohio Department of Education (ODE). One factor to consider is that, according to ODE, elimination of the geometry end-of-course examination will mean that eighth grade students who take the algebra I course will not have a high school assessment to take. The Department indicates that this situation would place Ohio's testing system out of compliance with federal law.

Table 1. Estimated Annual State Savings of Eliminated Assessments Once Fully Phased In	
Test	Annual Cost Savings
English Language Arts I	\$1,600,000
American History	\$1,200,000
American Government	\$1,200,000
Geometry	\$1,100,000
Total	\$5,100,000

ACT and SAT made optional

Current law generally requires all students in eleventh grade to take a college admissions test as part of the state's College and Work Ready Assessment System. The state contracts with ACT Inc. and the College Board to administer the ACT and SAT, respectively, to eleventh grade students in the spring of each school year. School districts choose annually which of the two college admissions examinations that their students will take. The state pays \$40 per student for the ACT and \$36.35 per student for the SAT. The ACT is, by far, the most popular option. For FY 2018, the state spent approximately \$5.1 million to administer both tests. A large majority of this amount, \$4.7 million, was for the ACT. That year, about 128,500 eleventh grade students in public and nonpublic schools took either the ACT or SAT.

However, not all graduates intend to or will enroll in college. According to data from the Pell Institute, around 60% of Ohio high school graduates go directly to college. If 60% of eleventh grade students (around 77,000 students) were to take one of these assessments, rather than all eleventh grade students, GRF expenditures for the examinations would decrease by \$2.0 million annually assuming no change in the state's cost per test. However, the percentage opting to take the test may be higher than 60% depending on various other factors. For example, some students may plan to defer enrollment in college but still would be interested in taking one of the tests as a junior. Higher percentages of students opting to take the test will decrease the state's savings. Table 2 below estimates the state's annual costs of administering the ACT and SAT at various hypothetical student participation rates, starting with a baseline of 100% under current policy, and the state savings corresponding to the various smaller participation rates. Any reduction in state costs for these tests would begin to accrue in

FY 2021, when the Class of 2022 is generally required to take one of the college admissions examinations under current law.

Table 2. Estimated Cost of State-Administered ACT/SAT Under Various Participation Scenarios					
Test	100% of 11th Graders	60% of 11th Graders	70% of 11th Graders	80% of 11th Graders	90% of 11th Graders
ACT	\$4,639,800	\$2,783,880	\$3,247,860	\$3,711,840	\$4,175,820
SAT	\$455,902	\$273,541	\$319,131	\$364,721	\$410,312
Total	\$5,095,702	\$3,057,421	\$3,566,991	\$4,076,561	\$4,586,132
Difference from 100% Scenario		-\$2,038,281	-\$1,528,711	-\$1,019,140	-\$509,570

Administrative costs

The bill also may minimally increase the administrative costs of school districts due to a requirement that each school district form a work group within 90 days of the bill's effective date to examine the amount of time students spend on required testing and various other aspects of testing and to make recommendations within six months of forming on how to reduce testing amounts. Districts may incur at least one-time costs to start these work groups, which are to consist of the following individuals: (1) the district superintendent, (2) a district curriculum or testing administrator or designee of the superintendent, (3) three principals, (4) three teachers selected by the local teacher's association, and (5) three parents of students enrolled in the district selected by the local parent teacher organization (or similar organization). Upon completion of the report, a district's work group may be dissolved, continue to meet, or be reconstituted in the future based on local need. Additionally, the bill requires a district board of education to consider the work group's recommendations and to adopt an annual (instead of a single) resolution if it wishes to exceed statutory limitations on testing time.

The bill will increase ODE's administrative workload by requiring the Department to annually publish a report on the amount of time students spend on required state and district testing, including the following: (1) a disaggregation of testing required by the state and additional testing required by a district, (2) efforts to reduce testing time and increase instructional time, (3) caps on testing as described in current law and a list of districts that exceeded them, (4) the purpose and use of the required state and district tests, and (5) resources for parents.