

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 612

PRINTER'S NO. 1135

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General

DATE INTRODUCED

February 18, 2011

PRIME SPONSOR

Folmer

HISTORY OF BILL

Referred to EDUCATION, Feb. 18, 2011

Reported as amended, April 5, 2011

First consideration, April 5, 2011

Re-referred to APPROPRIATIONS, April 13, 2011

Re-reported as amended, May 2, 2011

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF BILL

Senate Bill 612 amends Sections 1124 (Causes for Suspension) and 1125.1 (Persons to be Suspended) of the Public School Code to allow teachers to be furloughed for economic reasons and establishes a new evaluation criteria to be used, instead of seniority, when determining which teachers are to be furloughed.

The legislation allows teachers to be furloughed for economic reasons as part of a plan to reduce or control school district costs. School districts that furlough teachers would be required to furlough an equal percentage of administrative staff, unless the school district seeks a waiver and the Secretary of Education determines that compliance with the provision would harm the school district's operations and the State Board of Education approves the Secretary's determination.

The bill specifies a school district may not use cost as the as the sole factor in determining which employees it furloughs and establishes a new evaluation criteria to be used when determining which employees are to be furloughed which include: 1) the employee's certification; 2) the employee's performance, including but not limited to, performance under the Pennsylvania Value Added Assessment System and local assessments; 3) the employee's qualifications to teach a subject if the subject matter is not evaluated; and 4) specific qualifications set forth by the school district. Provisions that currently require furloughs to be accomplished in reverse order of seniority are removed.

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The bill provides that when an employee is furloughed, the position must remain vacant for one year, but the school district may reinstate the employee at any time.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect in 60 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 612 will have no adverse fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds. The administrative responsibilities delegated to the Secretary of Education and the State Board of Education are minor and can be accomplished within the existing operating budgets.