

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

BILL NO. Senate Bill 786

PRINTER NO. 1108

AMOUNT

No Fiscal Impact

FUND

General Fund

DATE INTRODUCED

June 21, 2021

PRIME SPONSOR

Senator Aument

DESCRIPTION

Senate Bill 786 amends the Public School Code in Article XV-G (Open Campus Initiatives) to expand the school entities authorized to establish an open campus initiative to include: a charter school, cyber charter school, regional charter school, multiple charter school organization, intermediate unit, and area career and technical school.

The legislation also provides that a cyber charter school may provide digital course content free of charge and may charge a negotiated fee to another school entity participating in the open campus initiative for the provision of staff, technology, digital course content, curriculum materials and other services for cyber courses.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect in 60 days.

For information purposes, under current law, an open campus initiative is a cooperative agreement between school districts that allows students to participate in courses not currently available in their resident school district. Courses offered through an open campus initiative may be delivered outside of a regular school building in whole or in part using technology such as the internet, video conferencing or other electronic means. The time during which a student participates in open campus initiative course is considered to be compliant with compulsory education requirements. Students from nonparticipating school entities (charter schools, cyber charter schools, nonpublic schools and home education programs) may participate in an open campus initiative for a fee depending on the terms of a cooperative agreement between school districts. A student's eligibility to participate in an open campus initiative is determined by the school entity in which the student is enrolled. For the purpose of Commonwealth reimbursements, a student participating in an open campus initiative is considered to be enrolled in the school district, charter school, cyber charter school, nonpublic school or home education program that determines the student's eligibility for participation in the open campus initiative.

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

FISCAL IMPACT:

The enactment of Senate Bill 786 will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds.

Participation in an open campus initiative is optional. School entities that choose to participate in open campus initiatives may realize savings to the extent they share curriculum resources and generate additional revenue through tuition fees charged for students from nonparticipating school entities.

To the extent that school entities participating in open classroom initiatives choose to utilize the services of cyber charter schools for a fee, cyber charter schools may generate additional revenue.