

# SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE

**BILL NO.** Senate Bill 460

**PRINTER NO.** 513

**AMOUNT**

No Fiscal Impact

**FUND**

General Fund

**DATE INTRODUCED**

March 16, 2023

**PRIME SPONSOR**

Senator Bartolotta

**DESCRIPTION**

Senate Bill 460 establishes a new Section 130 (Child Reunification Program) in the Public School Code to require the Department of Education (department) to provide inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kits to school entities for distribution to parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in first grade beginning in the 2023-24 school year to the extent that funds are appropriated or otherwise made available to the department for the program.

The legislation requires the department and each school entity to post on its publicly accessible internet website that identification kits are available to children enrolled in first grade, a description and the purpose of the identification kits and instructions for a parent or guardian to opt out from receiving an identification kit.

The legislation requires a school entity to distribute the identification kits annually by November 15 at no cost to the parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in first grade unless the parent or legal guardian opts out of receiving an identification kit. It also requires the school district of residence to make identification kits available to the parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in the first grade enrolled in home education programs.

The legislation requires a school entity to record the number of identification kits distributed each school year and annually report the number of identification kits distributed to the department. It also requires the department to annually post a report of the total number of identification kits distributed to school entities and the number of identification kits distributed by each school entity on its publicly available internet website no later than December 31.

The legislation prohibits a school entity from retaining information about the parents or legal guardians who receive identification kits. It provides that a parent or legal guardian who receives an identification kit may submit the identification kit, along with a physical description of the child, to law enforcement for the sole purpose, if the child is missing, of locating and returning the child to the parent or legal guardian. It also provides that information recorded in an identification kit is not a public record and is not accessible for inspection and duplication in accordance with the Right-to-Know Law.

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The legislation provides that the department may require a school entity to return to the department undistributed identification kits or offset the number of undistributed identification kits against the number of identification kits delivered to the school entity in the following school year.

The legislation defines a "school entity" as a school district, charter school, regional charter school, cyber charter school, intermediate unit or nonpublic school.

The legislation is scheduled to take effect immediately.

## **FISCAL IMPACT:**

Senate Bill 460 will have no fiscal impact on Commonwealth funds as the requirement for the department to distribute identification kits to school entities is dependent on appropriations made by the General Assembly.

For information purposes, using current first grade enrollments at school entities (118,443) and the per unit cost of an inkless, in-home fingerprint and DNA identification kit (\$2.95) sold by the National Child Identification Program, it will cost the department approximately \$350,000 to distribute identification kits under the program.