

Department of Planning and Budget
2026 General Assembly Session
State Fiscal Impact Statement

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ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB1373

Patron: Carroll

Bill Title: Office of Children's Services; assessment; feasibility of establishing a regional public day school in Planning District 16; report.

Bill Summary: Requires the Office of Children's Services (OCS), in collaboration with the Department of Education, each school board that governs a local school division in Planning District 16, and such other stakeholders as OCS deems appropriate, to assess the feasibility of establishing a regional public day school in Planning District 16 for the purpose of providing special education and related services to students with disabilities who would otherwise be placed in a private day school pursuant to the student's individualized education program but for the availability of such public day school, and report its findings and recommendations to the Chairs of the House Committee on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations no later than November 1, 2026. The bill provides that in the event that OCS fails to report such findings and recommendations by November 1, 2026, the school boards that govern the local school divisions in Planning District 16 may procure a comparable feasibility assessment from a qualified private entity identified by such school boards.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes **Item Impacted:** 272

Explanation: This legislation will require the Office of Children's Services to contract with a private entity to conduct a feasibility study.

Fiscal Summary: This legislation will require additional general fund resources in the Office of Children's Services to conduct a feasibility study.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>	<u>FY2031</u>
200		\$200,000				
TOTAL		\$200,000				

Fiscal Analysis: The Office of Children's Services (OCS) does not have the staffing or expertise to conduct this study in-house. To meet the requirements of this legislation, including an abbreviated timeline that requires a study to be completed and a final report drafted by November 1, 2026, OCS will require funds to acquire a private contractor.

Based on similar feasibility studies in other areas, it is estimated that OCS will need \$200,000 to conduct the study, although the ability to meet the deadline may still be limited.

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The bill does provide that if OCS is unable to complete the study by the prescribed date, the local school boards may procure their own contractor, however those costs would not be borne by the state.