

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

PUBLISHED: 1/29/2026 10:05 AM

ORIGINAL

Bill Number: HB859

Patron: Cousins

Bill Title: Department of Education; Farm to School Program Task Force; membership requirements; report.

Bill Summary: Amends the membership requirements of the Farm to School Program Task Force (the Task Force) established in accordance with applicable law by requiring the membership to include (i) one member of the Senate, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Rules after consideration of the recommendation of the Chair of the Senate Committee on Education and Health; (ii) one member of the House of Delegates, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates after consideration of the recommendation of the Chair of the House Committee on Education; and (iii) at least four members to be appointed by the Department of Education, including at least one school board member, one representative of the Department of General Services involved in procurement, one representative of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and one farmer or producer in the Commonwealth who sells only the farm or agricultural products produced or grown by him. The bill also directs the Task Force to study and submit to the Virginia Commission to End Hunger by November 1, 2026, a report on supporting, expanding, and improving farm to school programs in the Commonwealth.

Budget Amendment Necessary: Yes

Items Impacted: 123

Explanation: The Department of Education (DOE) would require additional funding to support staff to complete the work required by this bill as well as funding for data collection and analysis.

Fiscal Summary: The Department of Education (DOE) anticipates the need for one position at an estimated cost of \$174,196 general fund per year, including salary, benefits, and technology. DOE also estimates a cost of \$30,000 general fund per year for data collection and analysis.

General Fund Expenditure Impact:

Agency	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
201 (DOE)	\$0	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196
TOTAL	\$0	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196	\$204,196

Position Impact:

Agency	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030	FY2031
201 (DOE)	0	1	1	1	1	1
TOTAL	0	1	1	1	1	1

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Fiscal Analysis: This bill makes changes to the existing Farm to School Program Task Force. The bill requires the Task Force to study and submit a report on supporting, expanding, and improving farm to school programs in the Commonwealth. The Task Force was previously supported at DOE by federal discretionary funding that is no longer available to DOE. Therefore, in order to support the Task Force in developing the report and support the ongoing expansion and improvement of farm to school programs, DOE anticipates the need for one additional position at an estimated cost of \$174,196 general fund per year beginning in FY27.

The bill also directs the report to include data collected on farm to school programs. Based on previous farm to school efforts, DOE anticipates the need to contract with the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) through Virginia Tech to provide procurement and additional data collection and analysis. DOE estimates this contract at a total cost of \$30,000 general fund. If the intent is only to provide one-time data to support the report on November 1, 2026, then this could be a one-time cost. Ongoing funding would be required to support updating data to continue to support the Task Force and farm to school programs in out years.

Other: None.