

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

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ORIGINAL

**Bill Number:** HB359

**Patron:** Helmer

**Bill Title:** Use of public funds for private elementary or secondary school tuition; standards.

**Bill Summary:** Establishes several requirements and conditions relating to the use of certain public funds enumerated in the bill to fund student tuition at private elementary and secondary schools in the Commonwealth, including (i) requiring all students enrolled at schools who receive such funds to take Standards of Learning assessments; (ii) requiring all such schools to receive accountability ratings from the Board of Education; and (iii) prohibiting such schools from discriminating in admissions, enrollment, discipline, retention, or access to educational programs and services on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, special education status, language proficiency, or socioeconomic status.

**Budget Amendment Necessary:** Yes

**Items Impacted:** 123

**Explanation:** The Department of Education would require additional funding and positions in order to support the new responsibilities related to reporting, compliance, and technical assistance for participating private schools as established by the bill.

**Fiscal Summary:** The Department of Education (DOE) anticipates the need for six additional positions at an estimated cost of \$905,861 general fund beginning in FY27. DOE also estimates costs ranging from \$2.1 million to \$3.6 million to support implementation of the requirements in the first year. Additional costs in future years are indeterminate.

**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>
201 (DOE)	\$0	\$3.0 M-\$4.5M	\$905,861 minimum	\$905,861 minimum	\$905,861 minimum	\$905,861 minimum
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$3.0 M-\$4.5M</b>	<b>\$905,861 minimum</b>	<b>\$905,861 minimum</b>	<b>\$905,861 minimum</b>	<b>\$905,861 minimum</b>

**Position Impact:**

<u>Agency</u>	<u>FY2026</u>	<u>FY2027</u>	<u>FY2028</u>	<u>FY2029</u>	<u>FY2030</u>	<u>FY2031</u>
201 (DOE)	0	6	6	6	6	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

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**Fiscal Analysis:** This bill establishes several requirements for private schools that enroll students whose tuition is paid by public tuition assistance vehicles, as defined by the bill. The Department of Education (DOE) would have new responsibilities related to reporting, compliance, and technical assistance for the new requirements for participating private schools.

This bill establishes several new responsibilities for DOE to monitor or receive data from participating private schools and expands existing functions to include participating private schools and teachers at private schools. DOE would be required to facilitate the offering of Standards of Learnings assessments at participating private schools and publish results of those assessments; provide an accountability rating for each participating private school; ensure teachers at participating private schools are licensed; accept additional reports from participating private schools including enrollment, student demographics, academic results, graduation and dropout data, teacher licensure status, disciplinary incidents, and financial information; and provide technical assistance and model policies to participating private schools. DOE would also have new authority to conduct audits and investigations to ensure compliance. In order to meet these requirements DOE anticipates that six additional positions would be required, including a program manager, finance specialist, data specialist, auditor/accountability specialist, private school specialist, and a licensing specialist. DOE estimates a cost of \$905,861 general fund per year beginning in FY27 including salary, benefits, and technology to support these positions.

DOE also anticipates both one-time and recurring costs to support systems upgrades to integrate participating private schools. This includes updates to assessment system software, data integration, accountability dashboards, training modules, and IT infrastructure upgrades. DOE anticipates costs in the first year of \$2.1 million to \$3.6 million general fund in FY27. Ongoing costs are indeterminate and would depend on implementation and the number of participating private schools.

**Other:** None