

Department of Planning and Budget 2024 Session Fiscal Impact Statement

1. Bill Number: SB431

House of Origin Introduced Substitute Engrossed
Second House In Committee Substitute Enrolled

2. Patron: Suetterlein

3. Committee: Finance and Appropriations

4. Title: Schools boards; pupil transportation; alternatives; requirements.

5. Summary: Expands the availability of allowable alternatives to traditional school bus transportation services relating to the transportation of students to and from school or school-related activities. The bill expands the entities with whom and the purposes for which a school board may enter into agreements to provide transportation of pupils to include other school boards and comprehensive community colleges for the purposes of transporting students to and from concurrent or dual enrollment programs, career and technical education programs, joint and regional schools, and college partnership laboratory schools. The bill permits any school board to (i) provide, or contract with a privately operated entity to provide, for the purpose of transporting students to and from schools on a regularly scheduled basis a vehicle designed (a) to carry between 11 and 15 passengers, (b) as a specific type of school bus, in accordance with relevant federal and state laws and regulations, and (c) to carry nine passengers or fewer and (ii) in accordance with the provisions set forth in the bill, adopt a resolution to utilize alternative transportation providers, coordinators, and management services to supplement traditional school bus service. The bill requires any vehicle provided or obtained pursuant to clause (i) to comply with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations and undergo scheduled and random inspections by the Department of State Police. The bill establishes requirements for the contents of police reports relating to any school transportation-related accident to account for the use of alternative modes of school transportation to supplement traditional school bus service. The bill contains provisions prohibiting any school board from hiring, employing, or entering into any agreement with any person for the purposes of operating any vehicle to transport students unless such person meets certain requirements, including those requirements specific to persons who operate school busses.

6. Budget Amendment Necessary: No

7. Fiscal Impact Estimates: Preliminary, see item 8.

8. Fiscal Implications: There is no anticipated state fiscal impact as a result of the provisions of this bill. Any impact to local school divisions is indeterminate.

9. Specific Agency or Political Subdivisions Affected: Local school divisions, Department of Education, Board of Education, Virginia State Police

10. Technical Amendment Necessary: No

11. Other Comments: This bill is similar to HB842.