

2009 Regular Legislative Session
FISCAL ANALYSIS OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION
Prepared by the Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office

MEASURE NUMBER: HB 2507

STATUS: A Engrossed

SUBJECT: Modifying diploma processes and providing that a person younger than 21 years is not denied access to special education

GOVERNMENT UNIT AFFECTED: Department of Education, local education agencies (school districts and public charter schools)

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DATE: April 28, 2009

2009-2011

2011-2013

EXPENDITURES:

See analysis

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2009

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANDATE: This bill does not affect local governments' service levels or shared revenues sufficient to trigger Section 15, Article XI of the Oregon Constitution.

ANALYSIS: House Bill 2507 establishes the criteria which a student must meet to be awarded a modified diploma, an extended diploma, or an alternative certificate and requires a school district or public charter school to award these diplomas if a student meets these requirements. The bill requires a school district or public charter school to ensure that students have access to the resources to achieve these diplomas or certificate. The measure requires school districts and public charter schools to make the extended diplomas available during the 2009-10 school year. The requirements that a student must complete first apply to students who receive a modified diploma on or after July 1, 2012. The -1 amendment requires that rules adopted by the Department of Education (ODE) provide that a person 21 years or younger is not denied access to special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, even if the person has received a high school diploma, an extended diploma or an alternative certificate.

There is an indeterminate fiscal impact to school districts and public charter schools. Currently, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a person with an Individual Education Plan who exits high school with a standard diploma becomes ineligible for state or federal funding. The Portland School District reports that in 2007-08, 119 Special Education students earned a standard diploma. These students average 612 days (1.7 years) from today until they would turn 21; it is assumed that under this measure these students would be eligible for services until they are 21 years old. Required services and average costs per student per year vary dramatically depending on each individual's needs. The Portland School District is unable to estimate the average annual costs per student at this time. The Portland School District reports the specific costs it would incur as a result of this measure would include transitions services such as, job readiness, college readiness, and daily living skills. It is not known what the costs to school districts statewide would be to continue to provide special education services to persons who have received a high school diploma until the students reach 21 years.

The Portland School District reports that there would also be some costs associated with adhering to new standards for the modified diploma process and issuing the new extended diplomas. Currently, the

majority of modified diplomas are issued for special education students. Under the provisions of this measure the modified diploma process would be available to all students who meet the criteria as outlined in the bill. Potential costs could include training staff to determine which students would qualify for modified and extended diplomas and how to integrate the instructional needs of these students into classrooms with standard degree track students. Although these costs are indeterminate, they are estimated to be minimal.