

Date of Hearing: July 1, 2015

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Patrick O'Donnell, Chair
SB 497 (Vidak) – As Amended April 8, 2015

SENATE VOTE: 39-0

SUBJECT: Pupil transportation: data.

SUMMARY: Requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to request pupil transportation data from each local education agency (LEA) that provides pupil transportation. Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the CDE to request LEAs that provide pupil transportation to provide information on the following:
 - a) Revenue received for transportation services;
 - b) Number of buses;
 - c) Ridership of all pupils;
 - d) Ridership of pupils with an individualized education program;
 - e) Ridership of pupils who are eligible for free or reduced-price means;
 - f) Number of miles driven;
 - g) Approved costs;
 - h) Cost per mile; and
 - i) Cost per pupil.

EXISTING LAW:

FISCAL EFFECT: According to the Senate Education Committee:

- 1) Administrative costs: The CDE estimates initial start-up costs to develop the web application to collect data and communications from LEAs to be \$50,000 to \$70,000. Ongoing maintenance of the application and field support costs are estimated to be \$15,000 to \$25,000 depending on how many LEAs respond to the CDE's request. (General Fund)
- 2) Cost pressure: Because it is discretionary, there is a cost pressure for LEAs to report this information to the CDE without any additional funding.

COMMENTS: Prior to the enactment of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), home-to-school transportation costs were reimbursed pursuant to a formula that was enacted in 1984. Under that formula, local education agencies (LEAs) were provided state aid equal to their prior

year approved costs or their prior year state aid, whichever was less. Although the formula did not provide for a statutory cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), a COLA was typically provided in the annual Budget Act whenever one was provided to other categorical programs. In order to receive a reimbursement, districts were required to report specified data to the CDE to document their approved costs.

After the adoption of the LCFF, LEAs that received transportation funding in 2012-13 (the year prior to LCFF) continue to receive that funding outside of the formula, and they must continue to spend those funds on transportation. The 2014 Budget Act provides \$496 million for this purpose. LEAs receive the same amount they received in 2012-13 or their prior year approved costs, whichever is less. There is no adjustment for workload or inflation. Districts are no longer required to report transportation data to the CDE.

Reason for the bill. According to the author's office, the data required by this bill are needed by CDE for administrative purposes. The CDE confirms that this information is used by school districts and the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) to compare costs and evaluate the efficiency of local transportation services. Although the bill requires CDE to request this data, LEAs are not required to provide it. To the extent LEAs do not comply with the request to provide the data, the utility of the statewide database could be reduced.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

California Association of School Business Officials
California Association of School Transportation Officials
Los Angeles Unified School District
School Transportation Coalition

Opposition

None received

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