

**Fiscal Services Division**  
**Legislative Services Agency**  
**Fiscal Note**

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SF 245 - CORE Classes Accountability (LSB 1549 SV)

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Fiscal Note Version – As Amended and Passed by the Senate

Requested by Representative Jodi Tymeson

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**Description**

Senate File 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, requires the State Board of Education to determine a model core curriculum based on the recommendations of the American College Testing Program (ACT) and to set a goal of 80.0% of Iowa's high school graduates successfully completing a core curriculum by July 1, 2009. The Bill defines "core curriculum" as the minimum number of specific high school courses needed to prepare for advanced career and vocational purposes.

Local school districts are required to report annually to the Department of Education the percentage of graduates who complete a core curriculum. Districts are also required to report annually to each student in grades 9 through 12, and their parent, the student's progress toward completing a core curriculum.

Senate File 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, also requires the Department of Education to coordinate a working group to define key data areas for school districts to use in compiling State and local report cards. The working group must determine the baseline data necessary and develop a strategy to ensure districts apply the definitions and submit data consistently. The Bill defines the membership of the working group and requires it to submit findings and recommendations to the Department and the Senate and House Education Committees by January 15, 2006.

**Background**

Senate File 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, requires the State Board of Education to set a goal, but does not require school districts to meet it. It is not known how many districts would meet the goal. It can be assumed that some, if not all, districts would have to add courses to meet the goal. It is not known whether these districts would be able to provide additional courses by reassigning existing staff. Therefore, it is not known how many additional teachers would be needed. The assumptions below do not take the possible reassignment of staff into account. Any additional costs associated with meeting the core curriculum goal would be absorbed through the district's school aid funding.

**Assumptions**

1. The core curriculum goal will require all 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to take at least one English course and require all 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to take at least one Science course, one Mathematics course, and one Social Studies course.
2. An average class size of 20 and an average teacher assignment of six classes will be maintained.
3. Based on FY 2004 enrollments, the following additional classes will be needed statewide to meet the goal:
  - a. 239 new English classes
  - b. 1,051 new Science classes
  - c. 825 new Mathematics classes
  - d. 192 new Social Studies classes

4. A new teacher will be hired for every six classes added in each curriculum area, or a total of 385 new teachers.
5. The average regular teacher salary is \$38,000 with a FICA/IPERS adjustment of 14.0%, or a total of \$44,000.
6. Districts will incur minimal costs for reprogramming and data entry related to monitoring and reporting requirements.
7. No additional State funding will be provided to school districts to meet the core curriculum goal or reporting requirements.
8. Development of the model core curriculum will involve a number of Department staff across curriculum areas, equivalent to 0.1 FTE position. The Department will not hire additional staff for this purpose.
9. The Department will design, develop, and implement a data collection and reporting system to compile information submitted by school districts regarding core curriculum completion. This will involve a number of Department staff currently responsible for the Basic Education Data Survey (BEDS), equivalent to 0.1 FTE position. The Department will not hire additional staff for this purpose.
10. Coordinating the meetings and efforts of the working group will involve several Department staff, equivalent to 0.5 FTE position. The Department will not hire additional staff for this purpose.
11. Ten members of the working group will be eligible for reimbursement of expenses for six meeting

### **Fiscal Impact**

The impact of SF 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, on the General Fund is estimated to be \$9,000 in FY 2006.

The impact of SF 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, on the budgets of local school districts for monitoring and reporting requirements cannot be estimated but is expected to be minimal.

Senate File 245, as amended and passed by the Senate, does not require school districts to meet the core curriculum goal. The cost of meeting the goal statewide is estimated to be a maximum of \$16.8 million between FY 2006 and FY 2009. The actual cost is likely to be significantly less but cannot be estimated because it is not known how many new teachers will be required.

### **Sources**

Department of Education  
Iowa Association of School Boards

/s/ Holly M. Lyons

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April 4, 2005

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The fiscal note and correctional impact statement for this bill was prepared pursuant to Joint Rule 17 and pursuant to Section 2.56, Code of Iowa. Data used in developing this fiscal note and correctional impact statement are available from the Fiscal Services Division, Legislative Services Agency to members of the Legislature upon request.

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