POSTSECONDARY ED

Provides for the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund for funding programs for students with intellectual disabilities. (gov sig)

Proposed law creates the LA Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund within the state treasury as a special fund for the purpose of funding an approved comprehensive inclusive program at each public postsecondary institution in the state to provide pathways to degrees, certificates, and apprenticeship programs designed to increase living and employment opportunities for students with intellectual disabilities. Defines an “inclusive program” as a federally approved comprehensive transition program offered at a Louisiana public postsecondary institution. Provides that any money donated or appropriated to the fund by the legislature shall be appropriated to the Board of Regents for distribution to institutions for (a) the creation, operation, and expansion of inclusive programs; (b) technical assistance in creating or expanding inclusive programs; or (c) the dissemination of information on inclusive programs to students with intellectual or developmental disabilities or their parents. Establishes a Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council under the Board of Regents and provides for membership. Provides for reporting requirements.

**EXPENDITURES**

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**REVENUES**

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**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION**

The proposed legislation may result in increased SGF and statutory dedications expenditures for the Board of Regents (BOR) to administer the LA Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund. Monies in the fund shall be subject to appropriation by the legislature for distribution to public postsecondary institutions for the creation, operation, and expansion of inclusive education programs. To the extent it is funded, the Board of Regents (BOR) may incur additional costs to provide administrative support to the program. Currently, no such appropriation is contemplated in HB 1.

The proposed legislation requires the BOR to provide administrative support to assist the Postsecondary Inclusive Education Advisory Council in performing its duties and responsibilities, as well as developing an application process and distribution of monies in the fund. BOR will utilize existing staff and resources to organize the meetings; however, BOR may incur minimal travel costs if meetings are held outside of Baton Rouge. Any degree programs requiring reviews as a result of the proposed legislation will be administered with existing staff and resources.

To the extent funding is made available, postsecondary institutions will experience increased statutory dedications expenditures. Current inclusive education programs in operation in LA include: the UL Learning Is For Everyone (LIFE) Program at the University of LA at Lafayette, Louns Connected at Southeastern LA University, the Bridge to Independence program at Nicholls State University, the Postsecondary Apprenticeship for Youth (PAY Check) at LSUHSC-S, the Program for Successful Employment (PSE) at Bossier Parish Community College and PSE at Baton Rouge Community College.

Creating a new statutory dedication within the state treasury will result in a marginal workload increase for the Department of Treasury, which can generally be absorbed within existing resources. However, to the extent other legislative instruments create new statutory dedications, there may be material additional costs associated with the aggregate effort to administer these funds. The Treasury performs fund accounting, financial reporting, banking and other custodial functions for 436 special funds. When unable to absorb additional workload with existing resources, the Treasury anticipates it will be required to add one T.O. position at a total personnel services cost of approximately $73,000, plus approximately $2,450 for a one-time purchase of office equipment. These expenditures are assumed to be SGF in this fiscal note.

**REVENUE EXPLANATION**

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure. Proposed law creates the LA Postsecondary Inclusive Education Fund but does not provide a recurring source of revenues. Provides that funding is in addition to other monies appropriated or allocated to any postsecondary education management board.