

**LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE**  
**Fiscal Note**

Fiscal Note On: **SB 203** SLS 22RS 218  
 Bill Text Version: **REENGROSSED**  
 Opp. Chamb. Action: **w/ HSE FLOOR AMD**  
 Proposed Amd.:  
 Sub. Bill For.: **REVISED**

<b>Date:</b> June 3, 2022	12:33 PM	<b>Author:</b> HEWITT
<b>Dept./Agy.:</b> Education		<b>Analyst:</b> Garrett Ordner
<b>Subject:</b> Education Savings Account Program		

FUNDS/FUNDING REF INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 2  
 Creates an education savings account for certain students reading below grade level. (gov sig)

Proposed law creates an Education Savings Account (ESA) Program to be administered by the Department of Education (LDE) in accordance with Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) rules. Rules must provide for eligibility, audits, and LDE authority to deem students ineligible and to contract with vendors for administration. Requires LDE to allocate, from funds appropriated or otherwise made available, an amount equal to the state's per-pupil allocation as provided in the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula, and to develop a system for parents to direct account funds to participating providers. Provides that funds must be used for qualified educational expenses. Up to 50% of total funds deposited into the account in a school year may roll over if unused; funds may be returned to the state general fund under certain circumstances. Provides for student, school, and service provider eligibility. Requires the use of a nationally norm-referenced test or statewide assessment in participating schools. Provides for reporting requirements by the LDE.

EXPENDITURES	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>5 -YEAR TOTAL</u>
State Gen. Fd.	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<u>\$0</u>	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Annual Total</b>						
REVENUES	<u>2022-23</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2025-26</u>	<u>2026-27</u>	<u>5 -YEAR TOTAL</u>
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	<b>\$0</b>
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	<b>\$0</b>
Local Funds	<u>\$0</u>	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	SEE BELOW	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>					<b>\$0</b>

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION**

There will likely be an increase in state expenditures to develop and fund the Education Savings Accounts (ESA) Program. The Department of Education (LDE) anticipates program planning and administration will cost the department \$223,954 per year. All funding for awards must be appropriated by the legislature. Up to 5% of funding allocated to awards will be withheld for administrative expenses. State costs will increase to the extent a student participates in the ESA program who would otherwise not have attended public school; however, this is indeterminable. Local school systems may experience reduced costs due to reduced enrollment. Because per-pupil allocations vary by district, the ESA award will not equal the amount saved through reduced MFP funding; this will result in costs or savings depending upon the student's resident school district.

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO**

**REVENUE EXPLANATION**

There may be a decrease in MFP allocations to local school districts to the extent that the proposed legislation causes students to attend nonpublic schools in lieu of public schools; however, the extent of such losses is indeterminable. The ESA shall be closed and the funds in the account shall be returned to the state general fund if the student is determined to be no longer eligible, if an account has been inactive for two consecutive years, or if a parent fails to comply with the provisions of proposed law or state board rules pertaining to the program.

Subject to Louisiana Department of Revenue (LDR) interpretation, ESA funds may or may not be taxable as income based upon the Internal Revenue Service's (IRS) scholarship provisions. In addition, expenditures made with ESA funds may be deductible under the school expense deductions provided for in R.S. 47:297.10 and R.S. 47:297.11, potentially resulting in a reduction in state tax revenues.

Senate      Dual Referral Rules  
 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}  
 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}

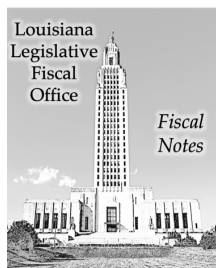
House  
 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}  
 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}

*Evan Brasseaux*  


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**Evan Brasseaux**  
**Interim Deputy Fiscal Officer**

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**CONTINUED EXPLANATION from page one:**

**EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE**

Participants will receive funding equal to the state’s per-pupil allocation as provided in the Minimum Foundation Program (MFP) formula, considering all student characteristics. According to the LDE, the proposed 2022-23 MFP average state per pupil allocation is \$5,436.

The proposed legislature contains three chapters, each listing a separate set of eligibility criteria. Students must meet one of the following sets of criteria to be eligible for the program:

- (1)** Students must be enrolled, or have completed in the prior school year, the second or third grade in a Louisiana public school. Additionally, eligibility requires that the student is not reading on grade level, as determined by the results of a literacy assessment provided during the current school year pursuant to R.S. 17:24.9. According to the 2021 Fall Reading Report, 24,006 second-graders and 22,915 third-graders were found to be reading below grade level.
- (2)** Students must be eligible to enroll in Kindergarten or have been enrolled in a Louisiana public school during the previous school year and meet one of three criteria: (1) the student has a parent or guardian in active duty military service; (2) the student’s parent submitted an inter-district or intra-district transfer request during the most recent transfer request period and was denied, or (3) the student is residing with a prospective or permanent placement through foster care.
- (3)** Students must be eligible to enroll in Kindergarten or have been enrolled in a Louisiana public school during the previous school year. Additionally, eligibility requires that either: (1) the child’s parent, legal guardian, teacher or other school official has made two or more reports of separate instances of bullying and either no investigation has occurred or no resolution acceptable to the parent or guardian has been reached; or (2) the student has been the victim of bullying that involved sexual assault as defined in R.S. 46:2184 where the perpetrator is a student at the victim’s school.

The LDE reports it will require \$223,954 to create one (1) Education Program Consultant 4 position (\$82,441 salary and \$37,098 related benefits) and one (1) Budget Analyst 4 or Budget Manager position (\$72,010 salary and \$32,405 related benefits). The Education Program Consultant will be responsible for the implementation of the program, policy and guidance development, partner/vendor management, and public outreach. The Budget Analyst 4 will manage the fiscal portion of the program and, in collaboration with other Education Finance staff and/or the external vendor, ensure that the program has appropriate fiduciary accountability. The LDE anticipates that FY 23 will be a planning year in which the department will research the viability of contracting with an external vendor to carry out a portion of the program administration and conduct an RFP to identify potential vendors.

The LDE estimates that in addition to funding for the needed positions and ESA awards, approximately 5% of funds made available to the program will be needed to cover the cost of the vendor to administer the program, as well as administrative costs that include equipment, systems, and other potential operating costs.

For illustrative purposes, if 2,000 public school students participate in the ESA program and the average state MFP per-pupil allocation equals \$5,436, deposits into ESAs will total \$10.3 M and the LDE could withhold \$543,600 (or 5%) for administrative expenses. This would result in the ESA awards equaling \$5,164 each.

The state will experience either costs or savings depending on the resident school district of the participants. For example, the projected 2022-23 state MFP per-pupil allocation to the St. Helena Parish School District is \$8,295; a participating student from this district would receive an award of \$5,164, resulting in a net savings to the state of \$3,131. However, the projected state MFP per-pupil allocation to the St. Charles Parish School District is \$2,873; a participating student from this district would also receive an award of \$5,164, resulting in a net cost to the state of \$2,291.

Local school systems may experience reduced instructional costs due to a decrease in enrollment; however, this is indeterminable.

There will be increased state costs to the extent a student participates in the ESA program who would otherwise not have attended public school; the number of such students is indeterminable. For illustrative purposes, there are an estimated 1,030 children 5 years of age whose parents are active-duty military members in Louisiana. According to the Military Child Education Coalition’s Military Kids Now 2020 Survey, 18% of military children are homeschooled or attend private school. If 18% of the estimated 1,030 military children choose to participate in the ESA program, those 185 students would produce an estimated state cost of \$1 M (185 students x \$5,436) plus an additional 5% (\$50,000) for vendor and administrative costs.

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House  
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