

HB 317-FN – AS INTRODUCED

2013 SESSION

13-0714
04/09

HOUSE BILL **317-FN**

AN ACT relative to verification of school district membership data.

SPONSORS: Rep. Weyler, Rock 13; Rep. Lerandeau, Ches 12; Rep. Kurk, Hills 2; Rep. L. Ober, Hills 37; Rep. D. Eaton, Ches 3; Rep. Ford, Graf 3; Sen. Stiles, Dist 24; Sen. Reagan, Dist 17

COMMITTEE: Education

ANALYSIS

This bill changes the procedures for verifying school district membership data and requires the state board of education to develop and implement a system for verifying such data.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
 Matter removed from current law appears [~~in brackets and struck through.~~]
 Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Thirteen

AN ACT relative to verification of school district membership data.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 School Boards; Definitions. Amend RSA 189:1-d, II to read as follows:

2 II. “Membership” means pupils of whom attendance is expected, whether a pupil is present
3 or absent on any given day, ***provided that a pupil whose whereabouts is unknown or who has***
4 ***not been physically present at the school to which the pupil is assigned for at least one day***
5 ***since the beginning of the school year, except for those pupils excused for documented***
6 ***medical reasons, shall not be counted in the district’s membership. The school district***
7 ***shall drop any pupil who is charged with 10 consecutive unexcused absences on the day***
8 ***following the tenth consecutive day of unexcused absence.***

9 2 New Section; State Board of Education; Verification of School District Membership Data.
10 Amend RSA 186:11 by inserting after paragraph XXXVI the following new paragraph:

11 XXXVII. Verification of School District Membership Data.

12 (a) No later than August 1, 2014, the state board of education shall develop and
13 implement a system to verify membership data submitted by school districts. The system shall
14 include, but not be limited to, a comparison of the lists of students reported for membership as
15 defined in RSA 189:1-d, II, and the list of students who complete the statewide assessment system
16 under RSA 193-C:6. The state board shall delete from membership any pupil incorrectly identified
17 on the district report.

18 (b) The superintendent and the chairman of the school board of each school district shall
19 jointly certify the accuracy of membership reports and submit such certification to the commissioner
20 of the department of education on forms developed for such purpose.

21 (c) If the commissioner determines that a school district has submitted an inaccurate
22 membership report, which in the judgment of the state board the superintendent knew or should
23 have known was inaccurate, the school district shall be subject to a 10 percent reduction of its
24 adequate education grant in the next fiscal year. The commissioner shall notify the superintendent
25 and chairman of the school board within 10 days of a decision to reduce the adequate education
26 grant. The school board of a school district whose grant is so reduced may appeal the commissioner’s
27 decision to the state board of education within 30 days of notification of the decision.

28 (d) The commissioner shall maintain records of membership reports submitted by a
29 school district. Three inaccurate membership reports by any superintendent shall be considered
30 grounds for revocation of the superintendent’s certificate of educational credentials issued under
31 RSA 186:11, X.

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1 3 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.

HB 317 FISCAL NOTE

AN ACT relative to verification of school district membership data.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Department of Education states this bill, as introduced, may decrease state expenditures and local revenue by an indeterminable amount in FY 2014 and each year thereafter. There will be no fiscal impact on state and county revenues, or county and local expenditures.

METHODOLOGY:

The Department of Education states this bill clarifies the definition of membership for the purposes of RSA 189 and changes the procedures for verifying school district membership data. The proposed legislation also requires the state board of education to develop and implement a system for verifying such data. The definition of membership is clarified to exclude students with no attendance and notes school districts shall drop any pupil with 10 consecutive unexcused absences on the day following the 10th consecutive day of unexcused absence. The proposed legislation also requires the state board of education to develop and implement a system to verify membership data submitted by school districts that includes but is not limited to a comparison of the students reported for membership and the list of students who complete the statewide assessment system.

The Department states the clarification of the definition of membership will reduce the average daily membership used to calculate adequacy aid. Based on a four year average, the Department estimates there are 15.92 students with no attendance per year. With an estimated cost of adequacy for FY 2014 of \$4,266, this would equate to a reduction of state expenditures and local revenues of \$67,925 ($\$4,266 \times 15.92$), however, the Department also notes there are many towns whose adequacy aid has been capped and accordingly reduces their estimate by 25% to \$50,944 ($\$67,925 \times 25\%$). The Department does not have the necessary data to estimate the number of students who would be dropped from the membership due to excessive consecutive absences and therefore cannot estimate the fiscal impact associated with the provision although any reduction in membership would be reflected with a proportional reduction in state expenditures and local revenues.

The Department notes the absorption of additional responsibilities at current staffing levels may affect the availability of personnel to address the Department's other statutory

responsibilities. The Department estimates the administrative requirements associated with the development and implementation of a system to verify membership data submitted by the school districts would require a 1/3 full time equivalent during the first year and a 1/10th full time equivalent to maintain the system during the second year and each year thereafter.