

FISCAL NOTE
 LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST ESTIMATE

ESTIMATE OF FISCAL IMPACT – STATE AGENCIES *				
	FY 2010-11		FY 2011-12	
	EXPENDITURES	REVENUE	EXPENDITURES	REVENUE
GENERAL FUNDS	\$100,500 or \$160,500		\$47,700 or \$92,500	
CASH FUNDS				
FEDERAL FUNDS				
OTHER FUNDS				
TOTAL FUNDS	\$100,500 or \$160,500		\$47,500 or \$92,500	

*Does not include any impact on political subdivisions. See narrative for political subdivision estimates.

LB 754 is the Blind Persons Literacy Rights and Education Act. The bill requires that individualized education programs (IEP) for children who are blind or visually impaired provide for instruction in the use of Braille unless the IEP determines that such instruction is not appropriate. Parents disagreeing with the determination that Braille is not appropriate may request a review of such decision.

The State Department of Education (NDE) is required to adopt the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard and the state and local education agencies are to adhere to contractual requirements related to such. Persons who teach blind or visually impaired children must demonstrate competence in reading and writing Braille by possessing certification from a national board or by passing an examination developed and administered by NDE. NDE may develop rules and regulations to implement the act.

The bill will have a general fund fiscal impact for NDE to develop and administer an examination for individuals who teach blind or visually impaired children. The fiscal note prepared by NDE shows two possible scenarios for the department to comply with the requirements of the bill. The estimated fiscal impact is \$160,500 of general funds in 2010-11 and \$92,500 in 2011-12 if the department develops and administers its own examination. Under this scenario, NDE would hire one FTE, with estimated salary and benefits of \$79,300, who would be responsible for the testing program and training teachers and administrators. About \$60,000 of the cost in 2010-11 would be a one-time expenditure to contract for the development of the test. Another \$10,500 would be expended to train educators.

The second option would be to have NDE pay \$250 for each of an estimated 50 teachers, for a total of \$12,500 in 2010-11, to obtain certification in literary Braille from the National Blindness Professional Certification Board. The certification would be valid for a five year period. NDE will hire a .5 FTE to administer the program and provide training to teachers and administrators. Estimated on-going general fund expenditures for a .5 FTE and training will be about \$47,700. It is also estimated there will be one-time costs of \$33,000 to purchase Braille equipment necessary for teachers to obtain certification and \$10,500 for educator training in 2010-11.

The bill may have an also have an unknown fiscal impact for the state in terms of hearing officer expenses, if a review of an IEP is requested pursuant to the bill. School districts may incur some unknown costs related to hearings, training and adherence to national standards.