



2017-2018 General Assembly

SENATE BILL 257: Appropriations Act of 2017, Sec. 7.35: Charter School Transportation Grant Pilot Program

Committee:		Date:	August 11, 2017
Introduced by:		Prepared by:	Drupti Chauhan Staff Attorney
Analysis of:	Sec. 7.35 of S.L. 2017-57		

OVERVIEW: *Sec. 7.35 of S.L. 2017-57 directs the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) to establish the Charter School Transportation Grant Pilot Program (Program). The purpose of the Program is to award grant funds to a charter school that meets the requirements of the Program for the reimbursement of up to 65% of the eligible student transportation costs incurred by the charter school in accordance with the terms of the Program. "Eligible student transportation costs" means costs incurred by the charter school for (i) transportation fuel, (ii) vehicle maintenance, and (iii) contracted transportation services. To be eligible for the Program and receive grant funds, a charter school must have a student enrollment of at least 50% of its students residing in households with an income level not in excess of the amount required for a student to qualify for the federal free or reduced price lunch program in a semester of the school year.*

By August 1, 2017, DPI must establish the criteria and guidelines for the grant application process for the Program for the upcoming school year, including any documentation required to be submitted with the application. DPI must accept applications until December 31, 2017, for eligible student transportation costs incurred during the fall semester of the school year and until May 30, 2018, for eligible student transportation costs incurred during the spring semester of the school year. From funds made available for the Program, the Department must award grant funds under the Program to the selected charter schools by January 15, 2018, for eligible student transportation costs incurred during the fall semester of the school year and by June 15, 2018, for eligible student transportation costs incurred during the spring semester of the prior school year. The total amount of each grant awarded under the Program must not exceed \$100,000.

DPI must report by March 15, 2018, to the Fiscal Research Division, the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee, and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee on the administration of the Program, including (i) the number of charter schools that received grant funds, (ii) the amount of grant funds awarded to those charter schools, (iii) whether implementing the Program has led to an increase in charter schools offering lunch, (iv) whether implementing the Program has led to an increase in student lunch participation at charter schools offering lunch, (v) whether implementing the Program has increased or expanded the offering of student transportation by charter schools, and (vi) the modes of student transportation offered by charter schools that received grant funds.

This section became effective July 1, 2017.

Karen Cochrane-Brown
Director



Legislative Analysis
Division
919-733-2578