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Senate Fiscal Agency  
P. O. Box 30036  
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536



Telephone: (517) 373-5383  
Fax: (517) 373-1986  
TDD: (517) 373-0543

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Senate Bill 658 (Substitute S-2 as reported)  
Sponsor: Senator Ken Sikkema  
Committee: Education

### **CONTENT**

The bill would create the "Blind Pupil's Braille Literacy Law" within the Revised School Code to do the following:

- Require the Department of Education to adopt braille reading and writing standards for teachers of blind and visually impaired pupils.
- Require a local school district or an intermediate school district (ISD) to provide information on the benefits of instruction in braille reading and writing to each person on a blind pupil's individualized educational planning committee.
- Require the Department to obtain braille versions of textbooks and/or electronic file format versions of textbooks that could be converted to braille versions.
- Require the publisher of a textbook that was adopted for instructional use by a school district to furnish the Department with an electronic version of the textbook.
- Prohibit a pupil from being denied instruction in braille reading and writing solely because the pupil had some remaining vision.

Proposed MCL 380.1704

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

There would be minimal, if any, additional cost to the State under Senate Bill 658 (S-2). The Department of Education already administers an instructional resource center, which currently performs many textbook conversion functions. Any possible additional costs would occur as districts and ISDs would submit their electronic or Braille version requests solely to the Department, rather than dealing with publishers directly. The Department possibly would need to fund additional employees to process these requests.

There is the possibility of reduced costs to districts and ISDs under the bill because of the cost restriction outlined in Subsection (5). Specifically, this language would prohibit textbook publishers from charging higher prices for the electronic versions than what is charged for the print or electronic media versions.

Date Completed: 2-7-00

Fiscal Analyst: K. Summers-Coty