

Legislative Analysis



SCHOOL LIAISONS TO THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 5833 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Brad Paquette

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

House Bill 5834 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Sherry Gay-Dagnogo, M.Ed.

Committee: Education
Complete to 8-31-20

SUMMARY:

House Bill 5833 would add a section to the Revised School Code that would require the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to establish and implement a school liaison program to facilitate communication between MDE and public schools.

The bill would require that school liaisons be able to **communicate directly with MDE staff** on matters relevant to the liaison's school, and that the system provide them with information on current and pending statutes, rules, and guidelines that affect public education. Liaisons would also have to be afforded the opportunity to provide feedback from the field to MDE on the effects of these statutes, rules, and guidelines. MDE would have to provide this information in a way reasonably tailored to assist liaisons in understanding and responding to the impact on their region and type of school.

MDE would have to prescribe a method for **each public school to elect a liaison**. Individuals employed in any capacity at the public school would be eligible for election.

The board of a school district or board of directors of a public school academy (PSA, or charter school) would have to ensure that the staff members of its respective public school have the opportunity to elect school liaison, and that the elected liaison has the opportunity to communicate the required information to other staff members.

Proposed MCL 380.1277c

House Bill 5834 would add a section to the Revised School Code that would allow MDE to host an **annual or other periodic networking conference** for the school liaisons across Michigan to discuss best practices, share challenges and ideas from their schools and regions, and otherwise promote the interchange of information. MDE would be encouraged to seek sponsors for any such event from among public education vendors, nonprofit organizations, foundations, and other interested parties to offset the costs of the conference.

Intermediate school districts (ISDs) would also be encouraged to arrange and conduct periodic regional networking conferences for the liaisons within their region.

Proposed MCL 380.1277d

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bills would create indeterminate costs for the state and for public schools and may increase costs for ISDs.

MDE would incur costs to establish and implement a school liaison program, which includes providing information to the liaisons regarding school-related statutes, rules, and guidelines; allowing for direct feedback from the liaisons; and prescribing a method for electing liaisons. MDE notes that costs would include, but are not limited to, additional FTEs, potential contract costs, and information technology (IT) costs. MDE estimates that, at a minimum, the department would need a manager for the school liaison program and staff members to facilitate program implementation.

MDE could incur additional costs if the department hosts a periodic statewide networking conference for school liaisons. While sponsors may offset some costs, MDE notes that department staff time would still be needed and that costs would depend on the size, scope, method of delivery, and frequency of the conference. A periodic conference is not required by the bills.

An ISD could incur costs if the ISD chooses to arrange and conduct a periodic regional networking conference for school liaisons. A conference is encouraged, but not required, by the bills.

A public school would incur costs to ensure staff members have the opportunity to elect a school liaison and to ensure that the school liaison has the opportunity to communicate with other staff members concerning information shared by MDE. These costs would likely be absorbed using existing staff time. A public school could also incur costs to send the school liaison to a regional or statewide conference if a conference is held and sponsor support does not cover participation costs.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.