

Government of the District of Columbia
Office of the Chief Financial Officer



Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia

FROM: Jeffrey S. DeWitt
Chief Financial Officer

DATE: December 3, 2018

SUBJECT: Fiscal Impact Statement – District of Columbia Education Research
Practice Partnership Establishment and Audit Act of 2018

REFERENCE: Bill 22-776, Committee Print provided to the Office of Revenue
Analysis on November 27, 2018

Conclusion

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2022 budget and financial plan to implement the bill.

Background

The bill establishes the District of Columbia Education Research Practice Partnership (Partnership) to conduct independent research on District education matters and practices and to publicly report on findings of the research. The Partnership is between the District of Columbia and an independent, non-governmental entity (such as a university or non-profit organization) that will be chosen through a competitive bid process. The Partnership will be governed by a five-year renewable Memorandum of Understanding and data sharing agreement negotiated by the Mayor with the Partnership.

Within 90 days of the effective date of the bill, the Council and Mayor are required to jointly issue a notice of invitation for the Partnership, soliciting bids from organizations for a minimum 10-year partnership. Potential bidders must provide examples of their educational research, provide a cost estimate and staffing levels for the Partnership, and identify potential sources of funding. The proposal review panel, composed of at least two representatives chosen by the Mayor and at least two representatives chosen by the Chairman of the Council, shall approve and select the organization that will join the Partnership.

The bill establishes a 21-member Advisory Committee, including representatives from the Council, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education,

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FIS: "District of Columbia Education Research Practice Partnership Establishment and Audit Act of 2018," Bill 22-776, Committee Print provided to the Office of Revenue Analysis on November 27, 2018.

the District of Columbia Public Schools, the Public Charter School Board, a public charter school local education agency, the Washington Teachers' Union, the Council of School Officers, and the State Board of Education. The remaining members will include parents, students, representatives of nonprofits, teachers, principals, or other stakeholders. The Advisory Committee must meet six times a year with the Partnership to review research projects and present any findings. In consultation with the Partnership, a four-year research agenda shall be established.

The bill directs the Office of the District of Columbia Auditor to conduct an audit on the data management practices of local public education agencies, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education, the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education, and the Public Charter School Board. The Auditor must issue a report to the Mayor and Council on the audit's findings.

Financial Plan Impact

Funds are sufficient in the fiscal year 2019 through fiscal year 2022 budget and financial plan to implement the bill. While no funds have been appropriated or included in the financial plan for the Partnership, the bill only authorizes, but does not require, the District to enter into such a partnership. The District has commissioned education studies in the past which have required funding,¹ however it is possible that the proposed partnership may provide a research partner with ancillary benefits for which it is willing to commit or identify funding. Prior to the commitment of any funds in an accepted agreement, any District costs must be identified and included in an approved budget and financial plan.

The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor can use its existing resources to complete the required data management practices audit and report.²

¹ Examples of the size of some recent education research projects include an enrollment study published by the Auditor at a cost of \$490,000 and a large-scale research project managed by the Auditor along with the National Academy of Sciences which cost approximately \$1.9 million. Depending on the scope of the Partnership proposed in this bill, and how the cost is shared with the Partnership, funds may need to be appropriated.

² The Auditor received \$500,000 in fiscal year 2019 related to incubating an education research consortium. The agency has discretion on how to spend these funds, which will be used for the audit, the salary for an Education Policy Director in the agency, and a separate education research project.