

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 305

Committee: Finance and Taxation Education Sponsor: Senator Arthur Orr

Analyst: John Friedenreich

Date: 04/09/2025

Senate Bill 305 as introduced would establish the Renewing Alabama’s Investment in Student Excellence (RAISE) Program and the non-reverting RAISE Fund in the State Treasury to provide additional funding for public K-12 schools for the purpose of addressing the educational needs of the student population pursuant to the provisions of this bill. Pursuant to the provisions of this bill, the annual cost of the RAISE Program would be determined based upon the weighted allocation, (established in the annual Education Trust Fund appropriations act for that fiscal year), for certain qualifying student groups and the base funding factor. Funding for the RAISE Program is subject to available funding for the RAISE Fund for any fiscal year.

This bill would establish: (1) an 11-member RAISE Act Review Committee to review progress of the RAISE Act and provide revisions for continuous improvement; and (2) a 15-member RAISE Act Accountability and Implementation Board to monitor the progress of local education agencies to ensure the RAISE Funds are spent effectively.

This bill would increase the obligations of the State Department of Education to: (1) beginning June 1, 2025, hire a third-party to support audit and development of a uniform application system to be used by local education agencies for planning, budgeting and reporting activities; (2) implement the provisions of this bill, beginning with the 2025-2026 school year; (3) by July 1, 2025, create and publish a RAISE guide outlining procedures for administering the provisions of this bill; (4) by January 1, 2027, develop a free professional learning series on the RAISE Act; and (5) propose a hearing process to be used by the RAISE Act Accountability and Implementation Board to determine if RAISE Funds are being used adequately to improve student outcomes for identified student groups.

Additionally, this bill would increase the obligations of local education agencies to comply with the provisions of this bill to receive RAISE Program allocations.