



LEGISLATIVE FISCAL OFFICE
Fiscal Note

Fiscal Note On: **SB 180** SLS 25RS 360
Bill Text Version: **ENGROSSED**
Opp. Chamb. Action:

Proposed Amd.:
Sub. Bill For.:

Date: May 28, 2025	9:38 AM	Author: BARROW
Dept./Agy.: Education		
Subject: Creates the "Farm-Ed" program and provides for funding		Analyst: Julie Silva

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT EG INCREASE GF EX See Note Page 1 of 1
Provides for a pioneering STEM technology program known as "Farm-Ed". (8/1/25)

Proposed legislation requires the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) to assist the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) to create a Farm-Ed pilot program to provide kindergarten through grade 12 classrooms with controlled environment grow chambers and a corresponding curriculum. The program is to be implemented in the same manner as the agriculture education immersion pilot program using funding appropriated or otherwise made available for its purpose.

EXPENDITURES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	INCREASE	
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Total						
REVENUES	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	5 -YEAR TOTAL
State Gen. Fd.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Agy. Self-Gen.	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ded./Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Local Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Annual Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

EXPENDITURE EXPLANATION

Proposed legislation is anticipated to result in an increase in SGF expenditures, though the total amount necessary for the Farm-Ed pilot program is dependent on the number of sites included and the method of implementation, as detailed below.


Depending on the size of the pilot program, LDOE may develop and administer it in-house; however, based on the unknowns of implementing its own pilot program, it may be more cost-effective for LDOE to issue a request for proposals and contract with a vendor. For example, one vendor, Farm-Ed offers a program meeting the requirements of proposed legislation at an estimated cost of \$10,000 per site; however, they require a minimum of 100 sites resulting in an annual cost of \$1 M. This contract would include the selection of pilot program sites, administration of the program at all 100 sites, the installation and bi-weekly maintenance of smart grow chambers and other necessary equipment, curriculum and teaching materials, and training for teachers.

The following information is provided to illustrate the potential costs that may result from LDOE developing and implementing a Farm-Ed pilot program on its own. Proposed legislation does not indicate the number of sites to be included within the pilot program. If a single site is selected, the program could be managed by existing LDOE staff at no additional cost. Expenditures include those to purchase and maintain a smart grow chamber, the purchase of instructional materials, and costs to train the teacher or teachers at the pilot program site using the smart grow chamber as an instructional tool. The cost of smart grow chambers varies widely, but a conservative estimate for a classroom appropriate chamber is between \$1,000-\$2,000. Additional costs for utilities (electricity, water), installation, and potential maintenance/upgrades can add to the overall expense and are likely to be dependent on the size and type of chamber selected. LDOE provides that the development and updating of program curriculum would require a contract with a teacher leader advisor, typically costing \$9,000 for initial development and \$4,000 annually thereafter to provide updates. The cost of instructional materials and teacher training is indeterminable and will be based upon the curriculum developed by LDOE.

If LDOE opts to manage and implement the program, costs would include the above, multiplied depending on the number of sites included. If the pilot program includes 10 sites or more, LDOE reports an additional T.O. position, an Education Program Consultant (EPC) 3, would be necessary to manage the program at a cost of \$128,913 (\$113,070 personal expenses and \$15,843 operating expenses). LDOE assumes an annual 4% increase in personal expenses and a 5% increase in operating expenses.

REVENUE EXPLANATION

There is no anticipated direct material effect on governmental revenues as a result of this measure.

Senate	Dual Referral Rules	House	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 13.5.1 >= \$100,000 Annual Fiscal Cost {S & H}		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 6.8(F)(1) >= \$100,000 SGF Fiscal Cost {H & S}	
<input type="checkbox"/> 13.5.2 >= \$500,000 Annual Tax or Fee Change {S & H}		<input type="checkbox"/> 6.8(G) >= \$500,000 Tax or Fee Increase or a Net Fee Decrease {S}	
			 Patrice Thomas Deputy Fiscal Officer