

LEGISLATIVE DIGEST

[Charter Amendment - Funding for the San Francisco Unified School District; Funding Conditions on City Appropriations for the School District]

Describing and setting forth a proposal to the voters at an election to be held on June 7, 2022 to amend the Charter of the City and County of San Francisco to modify the process for expending funds in the Public Education Enrichment Fund to support the San Francisco Unified School District; and to require the School District to enter a data sharing agreement with the City and the Board of Education to submit a certification of compliance with specified governance requirements before the City appropriates funds to the San Francisco Unified School District not otherwise required by the Charter or State law.

Existing Law

The San Francisco Unified School District (“School District”) is not a City department. It is a separate entity governed by an elected Board of Education. The City does not govern the School District and does not set rules for the governance of the Board of Education. But the City provides funding to the School District every year. Some of that funding is required by the Charter, and other funding is discretionary, which means the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor choose to appropriate extra funds to the School District in addition to the funding required by the Charter.

The Charter requires the City to distribute money each year from Public Education Enrichment Fund (“PEEF”) in three categories: one-third to the School District for arts, music, sports and library programs; one-third for universal preschool programs; and one-third to the School District for general education purposes. The PEEF requires that a certain amount of property tax be set aside for these three purposes and also establishes a “baseline” requiring that in addition to the set-aside contribution, the City must maintain the same levels of spending on these programs as existed before the establishment of the mandatory funds in the Charter. The baseline grows each year at the same rate as the City’s discretionary revenue grows.

Amendments to Current Law

This measure would place a restriction on the City’s ability to appropriate discretionary funds to the School District. As described above, the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor sometimes choose to appropriate extra funds to the School District in addition to the funding required by the Charter. The measure would prohibit the City from appropriating such funds unless two conditions are met: First, the School District must agree to share data with City departments about how the School District spends the City funds. Second, the Board of Education must submit to the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors a written certification, with an accompanying report, stating that the School District and the Board of Education have complied with a set of governance requirements. Those requirements generally include

establishing and supporting a strategic plan, the Board of Education refraining from interference in the administrative affairs of the School District, establishing responsible fiscal oversight, engaging with community members, modeling high standards of conduct, and participating in professional development and training.

The measure would also impose additional conditions on the School District to receive funds under the PEEF. The measure would require the School District to submit a proposal to the City once every five years describing how it plans to use PEEF baseline funds consistent with City's plans for child and family supports and services. The City could not provide the School District any PEEF baseline funds until the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor approve a proposal submitted by the School District. And the City could not provide the School District any baseline funds unless the School District has agreed to share data with City departments about how the School District spends the funds. Finally, the measure would require the School District to submit to the City quarterly and year-end reports describing how the School District spends and uses PEEF funding.

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