

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1223

(Delegate Braveboy)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Education - Public High Schools and Public High School Students - Data  
Collection System

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This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop a data collection system by July 1, 2012, to collect data about students who graduate from high school in three, four, or five years.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MSDE can develop and implement a system to collect information on students who graduate in three, four, or five years with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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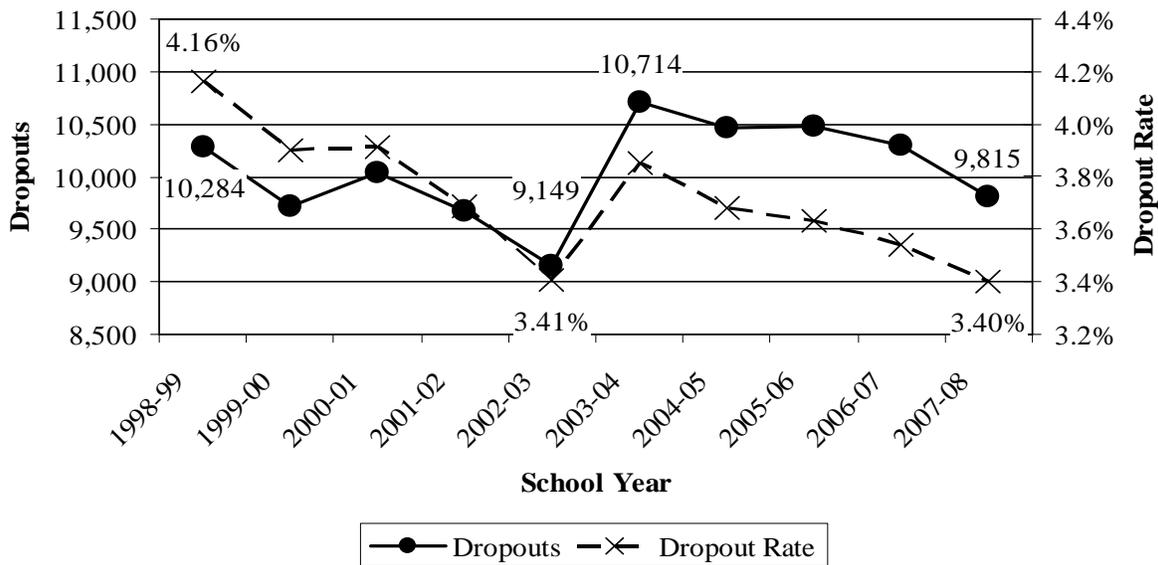
Analysis

**Current Law:** By September 1, 2011, and each year thereafter, a local board of education must collect and analyze graduation rates. The graduation rate has to be reported in the aggregate and disaggregated by race, by students who are limited English proficient, by students who receive free and reduced priced meals, and by students who receive special education services. The graduation rate is measured by dividing the number of students who graduate in four years by the number of students in the four-year cohort. MSDE must provide training and technical assistance to collect this information.

**Background:** An average of more than 10,000 students per year dropped out of Maryland public high schools from the 1998-1999 school year to the 2007-2008 school year. **Exhibit 1** charts the number of dropouts over this span and also shows the reported

dropout rate for each year. The exhibit shows that the number and rate of dropouts trended downward through the 2002-2003 school year before spiking the following year. Although the dropout numbers have been higher in recent years, high school enrollment has also increased during this period. For this reason, dropout rates have declined from the 4.2% rate experienced in 1998-1999.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Number of Dropouts and Dropout Rates**  
**1998-99 to 2007-08 School Years**



Source: Maryland State Department of Education

Dropout rates are not consistent across the State. **Exhibit 2** displays the number of dropouts and the dropout rates for each of the 24 local school systems in the 2007-2008 school year. The exhibit shows that Baltimore City has the highest number of dropouts and the highest dropout rate. After Baltimore City, the larger counties have the highest numbers of dropouts, but several Eastern Shore school systems have higher dropout rates.

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**Exhibit 2**  
**Number of Dropouts and Dropout Rates by School System**  
**2007-2008 School Year**

<b>School System</b>	<b>Dropouts</b>	<b>School System</b>	<b>Dropout Rate</b>
Baltimore City	2,123	Baltimore City	7.91%
Baltimore County	1,627	Wicomico	5.82%
Montgomery	1,404	Kent	4.98%
Prince George's	1,132	Dorchester	4.62%
Anne Arundel	813	Cecil	4.40%
Harford	391	Baltimore County	4.34%
Charles	278	Caroline	4.28%
Wicomico	278	Somerset	4.24%
Frederick	241	Talbot	4.07%
Cecil	238	Anne Arundel	3.24%
Howard	233	Allegany	2.95%
St. Mary's	163	Harford	2.95%
Calvert	122	Montgomery	2.87%
Carroll	122	St. Mary's	2.80%
Washington	120	Charles	2.69%
Allegany	96	Prince George's	2.42%
Caroline	81	Queen Anne's	2.34%
Dorchester	72	Garrett	2.11%
Talbot	67	Calvert	2.00%
Queen Anne's	63	Frederick	1.72%
Kent	42	Washington	1.67%
Somerset	40	Worcester	1.49%
Worcester	35	Howard	1.40%
Garrett	34	Carroll	1.22%
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>9,815</b>	<b>Statewide</b>	<b>3.40%</b>

Source: Maryland State Department of Education

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According to the *Data Quality Campaign*, 28 states have the ability to match student-level prekindergarten to grade 12 data to higher education data. In 2008, MSDE added unique student identifiers to its data sets to track students from kindergarten through high school. Institutions of higher education in the State do not have a global system of unique student identifiers.

**State Expenditures:** MSDE advises that its existing student database equipped with unique student identifiers can be used to calculate the number of students who graduate from high school in three years, four years, or five years by the 2012 deadline.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 857 (Senators Pugh and McFadden) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City Community College, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Higher Education Commission, Data Quality Campaign, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 16, 2009  
ncs/mwc Revised - Correction - April 3, 2009  
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