

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2011 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 1324
Ways and Means

(Delegate Conway, *et al.*)

Wicomico County - Board of Education - Selection of Members - Straw Ballot

This bill requires the Wicomico County Board of Elections, in consultation with the State Board of Elections, to hold a nonbinding referendum during the November 2012 general election regarding the selection of members of the Wicomico County Board of Education. The proposed referendum asks whether voters: (1) favor changing the method of selection for board of education members from appointment by the Governor to a nonpartisan election of a member from each council district and of some of the members from the county at large by county voters; and (2) oppose changing the current selection method.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2011.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: The Wicomico County Board of Elections can handle the bill's requirements with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Wicomico County Board of Education consists of seven members appointed by the Governor from the county at large and serving five-year terms. An individual may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Background: The Wicomico County Board of Education is one of five appointed school boards in the State, including one (Caroline County) that is in the process of transitioning to a hybrid board of appointed and elected members. Harford County has such a hybrid

board. Eighteen local boards are elected by county voters. The selection method and number of school board members for each of the 24 local boards are shown in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1
Local Boards of Education

School System	Number of Members	Term	Means of Selection¹
Allegany	7	4 years	E 5 from county at large 1 commissioner <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Anne Arundel	9	5 years	A 3 from county at large 5 from legislative districts 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore City	10	3 years	A 9 from city at large 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore	12	5 years	A 4 from county at large 7 from council districts 1 student (one-year term)
Calvert	6	4 years	E 2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Caroline ²	7	4 years	A/E 3 elected from school board districts 2 appointed from county at large 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Carroll	9	4 years	E 5 from county at large 3 commissioners <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Cecil	6	4 years	E 5 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Charles	8	4 years	E 7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Dorchester	7	4 years	E 5 from council districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Frederick	8	4 years	E 7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one year term)
Garrett	7	4 years	E 2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 commissioner <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)

School System	Number of Members	Term	Means of Selection ¹
Harford	11	4 years	A/E 6 elected from council districts 3 appointed 1 superintendent <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Howard	8	4 years	E 7 from county at large 1 student (one-year term)
Kent	6	4 years	E 5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Montgomery	8	4 years	E 2 from county at large 5 from school board districts 1 student (one-year term)
Prince George's	10	4 years	E 9 from school board districts 1 student (one-year term)
Queen Anne's	7	4 years	E 1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
St. Mary's	6	4 years	E 1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Somerset	5	4 years	E All from commissioner districts
Talbot	8	4 years	E 7 from school board districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Washington	8	4 years	E 7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Wicomico	7	5 years	A All from county at large
Worcester	10	4 years	E 7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)

¹A = Appointed by Governor, except in Baltimore City where board is appointed jointly by the Governor and the Mayor. E = Elected. A/E = Combined appointed and elected board.

²Voters in Caroline County decided at the 2010 general election to change from an appointed board to a combination appointed and elected board beginning with the November 2012 general election. The terms of the five current appointed members will expire December 2, 2012.

Source: Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article, Sections 3-101 through 3-1405; local board of education websites

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 981 (Senators Mathias and Colburn) - Education, Health and Environmental Affairs

Information Source(s): Wicomico County, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 18, 2011
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