

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2014 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 265
Ways and Means

(Delegate Hixson, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Task Force to Study How to Improve Student Achievement in Middle School

This bill establishes the Task Force to Study How to Improve Student Achievement in Middle School. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is required to staff the task force. A report with findings and recommendations is due by December 1, 2014.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2014, and terminates June 30, 2015.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any expense reimbursements for task force members and staffing costs for MSDE are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The task force must:

- study and analyze the findings and recommendations set forth in the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB's) *A New Mission for the Middle Grades* report;
- consider whether the findings and recommendations set forth in the SREB report would be feasible and appropriate to implement in the State;

- if the task force concludes that the findings and recommendations set forth in the SREB report would be feasible and appropriate to implement in the State, develop a Collaborative Action Plan to create a statewide framework for redesigning the middle school experience for students in grades 6 and 8;
- make recommendations on legislation and policy initiatives to address the educational needs of middle school students; and
- make recommendations on any other relevant issues or considerations identified by the task force.

Task force members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations, as provided in the State budget.

Background: SREB published a comprehensive report in 2011 titled, *A New Mission for the Middle Grades*. As stated in the preamble, the SREB report focuses on the mission to build a strong foundation to prepare students for success in high school, so that more students will graduate from high school and proceed to college or technical training. The SREB report suggests that students should begin to make a connection between their learning experiences in middle school and their pathway through high school to college, technical training, or a career.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Southern Regional Education Board, Department of Legislative Services

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