HOUSE BILL 265

F1 4lr0499

By: **Delegates Hixson, Ivey, Kaiser, Luedtke, A. Miller, Serafini, F. Turner, Walker, and A. Washington**

Introduced and read first time: January 20, 2014
Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

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

FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Study How to Improve Student Achievement in Middle School; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study a certain report and make recommendations regarding certain matters; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Study How to Improve Student Achievement in Middle School.

Preamble

WHEREAS, In 2011, the Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) Middle Grades Commission published a comprehensive report titled, "A New Mission for the Middle Grades"; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, 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; and

WHEREAS, Research further indicates students and parents are underexposed to the opportunities available through career and technical education; and

EXPLANATION: **CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.**
[Brackets**]** indicate matter deleted from existing law.

WHEREAS, The earlier in a student's academic career that the student begins considering career goals, the easier it is to motivate the student and connect academic subjects and lessons to real life applications; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) There is a Task Force to Study How to Improve Student Achievement in Middle School.

(b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

(1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(3) the Assistant State Superintendent for Career and College Readiness in the State Department of Education, or the Assistant State Superintendent's designee;

(4) the Secretary of Higher Education, or the Secretary's designee;

(5) the Assistant Secretary for the Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning in the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation, or the Assistant Secretary's designee; and

(6) the following members, appointed by the Governor:

(i) one representative of the State Board of Education;

(ii) one representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education;

(iii) one representative of the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland;

(iv) one representative of the Maryland State Education Association;

(v) one member who is a principal of a public middle school in the State; and

(vi) two members who are middle school teachers in public schools in the State, one of whom shall be a science, technology, engineering, or mathematics teacher.

(c) The Governor shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

(d) The State Department of Education shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force shall:

(1) study and analyze the findings and recommendations set forth in SREB's "A New Mission for the Middle Grades" report;

(2) consider whether the findings and recommendations set forth in the SREB report would be feasible and appropriate to implement in the State;

(3) 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 through 8;

(4) make recommendations on legislation and policy initiatives to address the educational needs of middle school students; and

(5) make recommendations on any other relevant issues or considerations identified by the Task Force.

(g) On or before December 1, 2014, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2014. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and, at the end of June 30, 2015, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.