

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 622 (Senator Currie, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Education - English Language Learner Liaison Pilot Program

This bill establishes an English Language Learner Liaison Pilot Program in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for Prince George’s County. The purpose of the pilot program is to address the specific needs of English language learner (ELL) students and their families. MSDE must report annually to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee on the effectiveness of the program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015, and terminates June 30, 2017.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. MSDE can implement the pilot program using existing resources.

Local Effect: None. The bill will not significantly alter current practice for the Prince George’s county public school system.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The purpose of the pilot program is to address the specific needs of ELL students and their families. Specifically, the pilot program must:

- identify students who are not English proficient, have birth and school records from another country, and whose primary language spoken at home is not English;

- counsel, in collaboration with school-based counselors, ELL students regarding academic and social concerns;
- monitor the progress of ELL students in mastering English proficiency skills with the goal of passing grade level English proficiency tests;
- provide local school system employees with educational and cultural information on language acquisition, and with workshops and in-service training on cross-cultural communication and other multicultural topics;
- coordinate with school-based counselors to provide crisis intervention to international students and ELL students, and their families; and
- provide appropriate information on college and career readiness, career and technical training, and career path counseling to ELL students and their families.

Current Law: State law requires each local school system to establish English as a Second Language or bilingual education programs for those students who have been identified as nonEnglish proficient or limited English proficient (LEP) by means of a home language survey as well as an assessment of English listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills that is considered reliable by MSDE.

Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 provides federal financial support to state education agencies and local educational agencies (LEAs) to supplement English language instruction in order to ensure that all ELL students, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic language proficiency in English, and meet State academic achievement that all students are expected to meet.

Background: The Prince George’s County Public Schools (PGCPS) English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program provides English language instruction and cultural support for ELL students who, through language proficiency testing, are determined to be in sufficient need. The students receive direct ESOL instruction from trained ESOL teachers in classes that meet on a regularly scheduled basis. Among the program components are:

- training of ESOL teachers on integrating technology and instruction, administering the ACCESS for ELLs English Proficiency Test, and aligning materials and lessons with the Maryland College- and Career-Ready Standards;
- training of mainstream classroom teachers on strategies for differentiating instruction for ESOL students in their classrooms, modifying materials for ELL students, basics of second language acquisition and development, and cultural awareness and sensitivity;
- encouraging parents of ESOL students to understand the American educational process and to become active participants in the education of their children; and

- providing guidelines for ESOL instructional practices and curriculum frameworks that address MSDE standards, indicators, and assessment limits.

The PGCPS International Student Counseling Office (ISCO) promotes the academic achievement, encourages the social/emotional development, and supports the college and career readiness of all ELL and international students in PGCPS. ISCO provides individual and group counseling services, including crisis counseling. In collaboration with the ESOL program and other programs, ISCO conducts professional development workshops as well as workshops for students and their families.

Student Performance Measures

Despite considerable additional support, LEP students are outperformed by the student population as a whole, statewide and in Prince George’s County, on State assessments of academic performance. High School Assessments (HSA), for example, are given in four content areas: Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, Government, and English. All students who entered grade 9 in or after 2005 must pass each test or achieve a total combined score of at least 1602 across the four tests. Students who do not, must meet HSA requirements through bridge programs or through a waiver. **Exhibit 1** shows the percentage of all students, and the percentage of LEP students in the county who met HSA requirements in 2014 on the basis of passing the assessments, including those who passed by virtue of meeting the minimum combined score of 1602.

Exhibit 1
Percentage of Prince George’s County Students
Passing High School Assessments
2014

	<u>All Students</u>	<u>LEP Students</u>
Grade 12	76.2%	29.4%
Grade 11	77.6%	29.6%
Grade 10	72.0%	20.0%

Source: 2014 Maryland Report Card

State Funding for Limited English Proficiency Programs

State formula aid for public schools includes targeted aid for LEP students. The LEP State aid formula provides an additional 99% of the per pupil foundation amount established in the foundation State aid program for each LEP student enrolled in public schools at the end

of October of the prior year. The State has an overall share of 50% for the LEP program, with more wealthy counties receiving lower State shares than less wealthy counties (the minimum State share is 40%). Unlike the foundation program, however, local governments are not required by law to provide a local share to match the State funding. Under current law, State LEP funding in fiscal 2016 totals \$217.1 million, including \$81.9 million for Prince George's County. Prince George's County accounts for 32% of students statewide who are identified as LEP (**Exhibit 2**).

State Fiscal Effect: MSDE advises that requirements of the pilot program are standard practice and procedures as part of technical assistance and monitoring provided by MSDE to all local school systems, and that these activities are collaborative in nature. Two MSDE Title III/ELL specialists are responsible for 12 LEAs each. PGCPS collaborates with one of the MSDE Title III/ELL specialists and receives ongoing support via phone calls, emails, and extra visits as compared to most other local school systems. MSDE anticipates that it would not be required to increase the frequency or depth of its engagement with PGCPS, but would assure that its ongoing engagement will meet the particular requirements of the bill. The other operational impact will be development and delivery of the annual report required by the bill. MSDE can handle these requirements using existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Prince George's County, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 10, 2015
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Exhibit 2
Students Identified as Limited English Proficient
Fiscal 2015 and 2016

<u>County</u>	<u>Fiscal 2015</u>	<u>Fiscal 2016</u>	<u>Percent Difference</u>	<u>LEP Students as Percent of Total Enrollment</u>		<u>Change in LEP Students</u>			
Allegany	16	17	6.3%	1.	Prince George's	15.8%	1.	Carroll	21.9%
Anne Arundel	3,559	3,887	9.2%	2.	Montgomery	14.6%	2.	St. Mary's	20.1%
Baltimore City	3,005	3,460	15.1%	3.	Talbot	6.9%	3.	Cecil	17.9%
Baltimore	4,031	4,236	5.1%	4.	Caroline	6.1%	4.	Charles	16.5%
Calvert	125	131	4.8%	5.	Anne Arundel	5.0%	5.	Dorchester	16.5%
Caroline	280	323	15.4%	6.	Wicomico	4.9%	6.	Caroline	15.4%
Carroll	201	245	21.9%	7.	Frederick	4.6%	7.	Baltimore City	15.1%
Cecil	145	171	17.9%	8.	Howard	4.4%	8.	Harford	15.1%
Charles	272	317	16.5%	9.	Baltimore City	4.4%	9.	Wicomico	14.1%
Dorchester	115	134	16.5%	10.	Baltimore	4.0%	10.	Talbot	13.5%
Frederick	1,727	1,818	5.3%	11.	Somerset	3.4%	11.	Washington	11.9%
Garrett	3	3	0.0%	12.	Dorchester	2.9%	12.	Howard	11.4%
Harford	357	411	15.1%	13.	Kent	2.7%	13.	Queen Anne's	11.3%
Howard	2,096	2,335	11.4%	14.	Queen Anne's	2.4%	14.	Anne Arundel	9.2%
Kent	65	53	-18.5%	15.	Worcester	2.2%	15.	Prince George's	8.2%
Montgomery	20,465	21,894	7.0%	16.	Washington	1.9%	16.	Montgomery	7.0%
Prince George's	17,768	19,226	8.2%	17.	St. Mary's	1.3%	17.	Somerset	7.0%
Queen Anne's	159	177	11.3%	18.	Charles	1.2%	18.	Allegany	6.3%
St. Mary's	189	227	20.1%	19.	Cecil	1.1%	19.	Frederick	5.3%
Somerset	86	92	7.0%	20.	Harford	1.1%	20.	Baltimore	5.1%
Talbot	267	303	13.5%	21.	Carroll	1.0%	21.	Calvert	4.8%
Washington	377	422	11.9%	22.	Calvert	0.8%	22.	Garrett	0.0%
Wicomico	602	687	14.1%	23.	Allegany	0.2%	23.	Worcester	-1.5%
Worcester	137	135	-1.5%	24.	Garrett	0.1%	24.	Kent	-18.5%
Total	56,047	60,704	8.3%		Statewide	7.2%		Statewide	8.3%

LEP = Limited English Proficient