

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2015 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Revised**

Senate Bill 295 (Senator Ramirez)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

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**Prince George's County - Education - Youth Wellness Leadership Pilot Program**

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This bill establishes a Youth Wellness Leadership Pilot Program in Prince George's County to promote youth-led health and wellness advocacy skills and to teach participating students skills in health and wellness, academic performance, peer education, leadership, career development, and economic well-being. After consultation with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH), the Prince George's County Board of Education must establish the program for 125 public high school students. The school board may collaborate with local community organizations involved in youth-led health and wellness advocacy programs and may use funds donated by such organizations to implement the pilot program. The school board must report annually on the effectiveness of the program to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2015, and terminates September 30, 2018.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) expenditures are not substantially affected. Local revenues are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Every public school must have a program of physical education that is given in a planned and sequential manner to all students in order to develop their good

health and physical fitness and improve their motor coordination and physical skills. The specific curriculum and course of study is set by each local board of education.

Each local school system must offer in its public schools a comprehensive health education program in grades 9 through 12 that enables students to meet graduation requirements and to select health education electives. With the assistance of the local health department, each local board of education must provide adequate school health services; instruction in health education, including the importance of physical activity in maintaining good health; and a healthful school environment.

In June 2010, Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) adopted regulations requiring each local school system to implement personal financial literacy programs in elementary, middle, and high schools. By September 1, 2011, and every five years after that, local superintendents must certify to the State Superintendent that the instructional program in the elementary, middle, and high school learning years meets, at a minimum, the financial literacy content standards described in the regulations.

**Background:** In March 2013, PGCPS entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with End Time Harvest Ministries (ETHM). Under the MOU, which was renewed in January 2015, ETHM is authorized to implement its Pathways to Career Success Program and its Wellness Ambassadors and Leadership Program for students at Bladensburg High School. Objectives under the MOU are to prepare students to be college and career ready; equip students with leadership and character skills; and promote student-led health and wellness advocacy.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** PGCPS advises that it currently has a youth wellness leadership program in place at Bladensburg High School that fulfills the requirements of the bill. The program serves 125 students across the four grades, adding a cohort of about 30 students each year. The program is run by ETHM, and per the MOU between ETHM and PGCPS, ETHM carries out all activities at no cost to the school system. PGCPS advises that the school system operates several other programs, each of which serve students in one or more capacities required by the bill. The bill requires that the pilot program must serve 125 students in public high schools in the county. Therefore, PGCPS will need to incorporate at least a small percentage of students from a high school other than Bladensburg High School in the pilot program.

PGCPS advises that the school system will consider amending its current arrangement with ETHM to include students from at least one other high school. It is assumed that PGCPS can do so during the time frame of the pilot program, with assistance from ETHM and other partnering organizations, in a cost neutral manner compared to current programming costs. PGCPS advises that the school system is also considering expanding its existing program to cover an additional 30 students in the first year of the pilot program, at another high

school, at an additional cost of \$87,500. The Department of Legislative Services notes that the bill does not require expansion beyond serving 125 students total in any year of the pilot program; the same number of students presently served under the MOU with ETHM. Further, the bill does not require the pilot program to use the services of ETHM or its model. Based on information provided by MSDE, the bill's requirements may be met by holding a 3-day conference each year for students in the program, at a total cost of approximately \$50,000 each year, to cover the cost of lodging, meals, transportation, audio/visual equipment, honoraria for speakers, and miscellaneous expenses.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill, SB 1069 of 2014, received a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee but no further action was taken on the bill.

**Cross File:** HB 197 (Delegate Fennell, *et al.*) - Ways and Means.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 16, 2015  
mel/rhh Revised - Senate Third Reader - March 31, 2015

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