

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
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FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1488
Ways and Means

(Delegates A. Washington and Jackson)

Public Schools - School Discipline - Training Practices

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop and implement standardized training practices on student discipline for all public school security personnel by July 1, 2019. By July 1, 2020, local school systems must provide training to all school security personnel in the public schools on the standardized training practices developed by MSDE. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can develop and implement the required training practices using existing resources.

Local Effect: Local school system expenditures in some counties may increase to provide standardized training to school security personnel beginning in FY 2020. Training costs depend on the training practices developed by MSDE and the number of school security personnel in each school system. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: When developing the standardized training practices on student discipline for public school security personnel, MSDE must:

- study national best practices on training and deploying school security personnel;

- consult on current training practices for public school security personnel with the Maryland Police Academy, the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission, the Maryland Association of School Resource Officers (MASRO), and the Maryland Center for School Safety; and
- consult with organizations that are involved in work relating to conflict resolution and dispute settlement.

Current Law/Background: A principal, vice principal, or other public school employee may not administer corporal punishment to a public school student in the State. The State Board of Education must establish guidelines that define a State code of discipline for all public schools with standards of conduct and consequences for violations of the standards and assist each local school system with implementing the guidelines.

Each local board of education must adopt regulations designed to create and maintain an atmosphere of order and discipline necessary for effective learning in public schools. These regulations must provide for educational and behavioral interventions, counseling, and student and parent conferencing; and provide alternative programs, which may include in-school suspension, suspension, expulsion, or other necessary disciplinary measures.

A “school security officer” includes a school principal, another school administrator, a law enforcement officer, or other individual employed by a local school system or a local government who is designated by the local superintendent or a school principal to help maintain the security and safety of a school. “School security officer” does not include a teacher. A “school resource officer” is defined as a law enforcement officer who has been assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between the chief of a law enforcement agency and a local school system.

MSDE advises that each local school system provides ongoing training and professional development to staff on the code of conduct adopted by the local board of education and that the Maryland Center for School Safety makes training available to local school systems. Also, any updates to the Maryland Guidelines for a State Code of Discipline are addressed in periodic meetings conducted by MSDE involving local school safety directors and local directors of student services. The guidelines were last updated in July 2014.

Chapter 273 of 2013 established the Maryland Center for School Safety as an independent unit of State government. The center must provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to school safety. Among its many functions and duties, the center must identify safe school professional staff development best practices; provide technical assistance and consultation to local school systems, State and local government, and community organizations on best practices for safe schools and violence prevention; and assist local school systems to monitor behavior data to ensure fairness in the application of consequences for student misbehavior.

According to its website, MASRO is a nonprofit organization formed to promote law-related education and safety of students. MASRO offers training to police officers, including school resource officers, and professionals in the juvenile justice field.

Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) has its own school police force that provides security services to the entire school district, or approximately 180 school locations within Baltimore City. The budget of the school police force totaled \$8.5 million in fiscal 2016 and \$7.2 million in fiscal 2017. The school police force currently employs approximately 100 officers.

Some other local school systems have memorandums of understanding with local law enforcement agencies to have specially trained officers, known as school resource officers, in schools. In 2016, MSDE reported that there were 305 school resource officers in the State. It is unknown how many, if any, other school security personnel may be employed by local school systems.

Local Fiscal Effect: The bill requires local school systems to implement MSDE's standardized training practices for all school security personnel by July 1, 2020. The cost of the training cannot be determined until MSDE adopts the standardized training practices. However, MSDE advises that one model of a training program previously used by MSDE costs approximately \$1,500 for one class of 30 participants for an eight-hour training program. Materials cost an additional \$20 per person, resulting in a total cost of approximately \$70 per participant for the training.

Any additional costs to a local school system beginning in fiscal 2020 will depend upon the degree to which current training practices align with the standardized training practices developed by MSDE and required under the bill. The largest impact may be on BCPS, which employs approximately 100 police officers. However, BCPS advises that its current training practices were developed with input from the Maryland Center for School Safety, which must be consulted by MSDE under the bill. Statewide there are approximately 305 school resource officers in the other 23 school systems. There may be other school security personnel that require training depending on the practices implemented by MSDE. Carroll County advises that none of its school system personnel are covered under the bill; the same may be true for other counties.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services; Baltimore City; Carroll County; Department of State Police; Department of Legislative Services

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