

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Third Reader

Senate Bill 640 (Senator Guzzone)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Appropriations

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Maryland School for the Blind - Board of Directors - Reappointments

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This bill allows a member of the Board of Directors for the Maryland School for the Blind (MSB) who serves three consecutive terms to be reappointed for an additional term after waiting one year from the completion of a third consecutive term. However, the chairman may be reappointed to serve additional terms immediately after completion of three consecutive terms. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020.**

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None. The bill applies only to the board of directors of MSB.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** MSB is governed by a board consisting of 25 members. Of the 25 members, subject to confirmation by the Senate of Maryland, five members, including one member of the Senate of Maryland and one member of the Maryland House of Delegates, must be appointed jointly by the Governor and the State Superintendent of Schools, with recommendations from the chairman of the board; and 20 members must be elected according to the charter and bylaws of MSB.

The term of a member is three years. No member of the board appointed after June 1, 1999, except the chairman, may be reappointed for more than two additional terms. A member who is appointed after a term has begun serves only for the rest of the term and until a

successor is appointed. Any vacancy must be filled in the same manner in which the vacating member was appointed.

**Background:** MSB serves students from birth to age 21 who are blind or visually impaired, including some with multiple disabilities. MSB educates students whose needs cannot be met in their respective 24 local school systems through community-based outreach and comprehensive on-campus programs on a day or residential basis. Each student has a mandated individualized education plan tailored to his or her needs. The MSB program includes general education subjects and, in addition, special instruction in the disability-specific areas of the expanded core curriculum that includes Braille, orientation and mobility, career education, and independent living skills. Exit goals for students, depending on their abilities, are to earn either a high school diploma or a certificate of attendance at graduation or, prior to graduation, return to their local school systems with increased skill levels essential for successful reintegration and academic achievement.

MSB receives the majority of its funding through a State formula grant that is based on growth in enrollment and growth in State per pupil funding. MSB receives additional State funding through the Enhanced Services grant, which provides supplemental funding for blind students with additional disabilities who are at-risk for out-of-state placement, though this funding is located outside of the Funding for Educational Organizations budget.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 760 (Delegate Smith) - Appropriations.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 14, 2020  
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