

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 776

(Delegate Ebersole)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Department of Education - Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health
 Consultation Project - Study and Report

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to conduct a study of the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation Project. As part of the study, MSDE must, among other things, review the goals of the project, assess the need for new services, report on progress the project has made, and consider ways to integrate the project with other specified services. MSDE must report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before January 1, 2022. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2021.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$150,000 in FY 2022 to complete the study. Revenues not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	150,000	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$150,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: As part of the study of the IECMH Consultation Project, MSDE must:

- review the goals of the project and how effectively those goals have been met;
- assess the need for IECMH across the State and the capacity of existing project services to meet that need;
- identify any areas in the State where project services are insufficient or absent;
- evaluate the capacity of the project to meet service gaps;
- examine the feasibility of project expansion to fill gaps;
- assess the costs and benefits associated with current project staffing qualifications and potential alternative qualification models, including the capacity for the project to continue to provide needed services under alternative models;
- consider how the project could be integrated with existing school psychological services;
- examine how the project could be integrated with public funded prekindergarten programs and with programs designed to prevent suspension and expulsion from under § 7-305.1 of the Education Article (Chapter 843 and 844 of 2017); and
- calculate the costs required to expand project services and achieve the goals identified by the study.

MSDE must report on any progress made toward completing the recommendations the project set forth in its most recent [gap analysis](#). MSDE must consult with and seek input from relevant stakeholders as a part of its duties under the bill.

Current Law:

Suspension and Expulsion of Young Children

Chapters 843 and 844 of 2017 prohibit students in public prekindergarten, kindergarten, or first or second grades from being suspended or expelled, except that:

- a student in those grades may be expelled if required by federal law (generally, for bringing a firearm to school); and
- a student in those grades may be suspended for up to five days if the school administration, in consultation with a school psychologist or other mental health professional, determines that there is an imminent threat of serious harm to other students or staff that cannot be reduced or eliminated through interventions and supports.

For students in prekindergarten through grade 2 who are suspended or who commit an act that would otherwise be grounds for suspension, local school systems must provide intervention and support to address the student's behavior. Intervention and support include (1) positive behavior interventions and supports; (2) a behavior intervention plan; (3) a referral to a student support team; (4) a referral to an individualized education program; and (5) a referral for appropriate community-based services. The school system must remedy the effect of a student's behavior through appropriate intervention methods including restorative practices.

State Expenditures: General fund expenditures increase by an estimated \$150,000 for MSDE's Early Childhood Division to contract with a third party to complete the study, including the requirement to assess the costs and benefits associated with current project staffing qualifications and potential alternative qualification models, and required report within the six-month timeframe required by the bill.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 11, 2021
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