

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2023 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader - Revised**

Senate Bill 31

(Senator Carter)

Education, Energy, and the Environment

Ways and Means

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**Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Student Members and Task  
Force to Study Compensation and Student Members**

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This bill expands the voting rights of the student member of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. The bill also alters the selection process for the student member by requiring that the student member be elected by the high school students of Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS), in accordance with procedures established by the board in collaboration with the Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City. Finally, the bill establishes a task force to study board member compensation and additional student membership. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2023, with the provisions relating to the task force terminating on June 30, 2024.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Any expense reimbursements for task force members are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** BCPS can implement the bill's requirements with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The bill includes several provisions relating to the student member of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. The bill also establishes a task force to study the compensation of board members and whether an additional student member should be added to the board.

### *Student Member*

Under the bill, the student board member must be a regularly enrolled junior or senior year student in BCPS. The voting rights of the student board member are expanded to include matters relating to capital and operating budgets; school closings, reopenings, and boundaries; and student disciplinary matters. The student board member is still prohibited from voting on matters relating to personnel and collective bargaining decisions. Additionally, the student board member may attend and participate in an executive session of the board.

### *Task Force*

The bill establishes the Task Force to Study Compensation and Student Members of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. The Office of the Mayor of Baltimore City must provide staff for the task force. A member of the task force may not receive compensation but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations. The task force must (1) study the compensation of all members of the board; (2) study the possibility and effect of adding a second student member to the board; and (3) make recommendations regarding the amount and revenue stream for any proposed compensation beginning in fiscal 2025. The task force must report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly by April 1, 2024.

**Current Law:** Following the 2022 general election, the board has been restructured as a hybrid appointed and elected board with two members elected from the city at large, nine members appointed by the mayor, and one student member. Elected members serve a four-year term, appointed members serve a three-year term.

There are 20 elected school boards and four hybrid boards in the State. The **Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local boards of education.

### *Student Member*

Under current law, the student member must be a student enrolled in BCPS. The student member must be selected by the Associated Student Congress of Baltimore City and may not serve more than two consecutive one-year terms.

Student members may vote on all matters before the board except those relating to (1) personnel; (2) capital and operating budgets; (3) school closings, reopening, and boundaries; (4) collective bargaining decisions; (5) student disciplinary matters; and (6) appeals to the board relating to suspension or dismissal of teachers, principals, and other

professional personnel. The student member may not attend or participate in an executive or special session of the board.

### *Compensation*

Each member of the board serves without compensation.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** BCPS advises that, while there may be a minimal increase in costs to contract for the creation and counting of student ballots for student member elections, any additional costs can be covered with existing resources. The Office of the Mayor can staff the task force with existing resources.

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## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See SB 157 and HB 433 of 2022.

**Designated Cross File:** HB 153 (Delegate Wells) - Ways and Means.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City; Baltimore City Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 23, 2023  
js/hlb Third Reader - March 17, 2023  
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## Appendix – Local Boards of Education Membership

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### Membership

The composition of the local boards of education varies with members serving three- to four-year terms. Twenty counties have elected school boards and four counties have combined appointed and elected school boards. Twenty-two boards have student members; however, only 8 boards allow student members to vote, which generally excludes authority to vote on matters relating to collective bargaining, personnel, and operating and capital budgets. **Exhibit 1** shows the selection methods, terms of office, and membership of the 24 local school boards.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Local Boards of Education**  
**As of January 2023**

School System	Number of Members	Term		Means of Selection <sup>1</sup>
Allegany	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Anne Arundel <sup>2</sup>	8	4 years	E	7 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore City <sup>3</sup>	12	3 or 4 years	A/E	2 elected from city at large 9 appointed by mayor 1 student (one-year term)
Baltimore	12	4 years	A/E	4 appointed from county at large 7 elected from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Calvert	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Caroline	7	4 years	A/E	3 elected from school board districts 2 appointed from county at large 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Carroll	11	4 years	E	5 from county at large 5 commissioners <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Cecil	6	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)

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<b>School System</b>	<b>Number of Members</b>	<b>Term</b>		<b>Means of Selection<sup>1</sup></b>
Charles <sup>4</sup>	10	4 years	E	1 from county at large 8 from commissioner districts 1 student (one-year term)
Dorchester	8	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Frederick	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Garrett	6	4 years	E	2 from county at large 3 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Harford <sup>5</sup>	11	4 years	A/E	6 elected from councilmanic districts 3 appointed from county at large 1 superintendent <i>ex officio</i> (nonvoting) 1 student (one-year term)
Howard	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from councilmanic districts 1 student (one-year term)
Kent <sup>6</sup>	6	4 years	E	5 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Montgomery	8	4 years	E	2 from county at large 5 from school districts 1 student (one-year term)
Prince George's <sup>7</sup>	10	4 years	E	9 from school board districts 1 student (one-year term)
Queen Anne's	7	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
St. Mary's	6	4 years	E	1 from county at large 4 from commissioner districts 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Somerset	5	4 years	E	5 from commissioner districts
Talbot	9	4 years	E	7 from school board districts 2 students (nonvoting, one-year term)
Washington <sup>8</sup>	8	4 years	E	7 from county at large 1 student (nonvoting, one-year term)
Wicomico	7	4 years	E	5 from councilmanic districts 2 from county at large
Worcester	10	4 years	E	7 from commissioner districts 3 students (nonvoting, one-year term)

<sup>1</sup> E = Elected and A/E = Combined appointed by Governor and elected board, except (1) in Baltimore City, members are appointed by the mayor and (2) in Harford County, members are appointed by the county executive with the advice and consent of the county council. Entries for local boards that are at any point in the process of transitioning between means of selection reflect the final state the board will be in once the transition fully takes effect.

<sup>2</sup> Chapter 473 of 2017 restructured the Anne Arundel County Board of Education from a nine-member appointed board to an eight-member elected board consisting of seven elected members (one from each of the seven councilmanic districts on a nonpartisan basis) and one student member. The terms of the elected members are staggered; four members were elected at the 2018 general election and three members were elected at the 2020 general election as the terms of previously appointed board members expired. In this manner, the elected board is phased in. The members elected in 2018 serve a six-year term, while the members elected in 2020 serve a four-year term. Thus, beginning in 2024, all members must stand for election. An elected member of the board generally serves a four-year term beginning on the first Monday in December after the member's election and until a successor is elected and qualifies.

<sup>3</sup> Chapter 593 of 2017 repealed the role of the Governor in making appointments to the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners; it also repealed the Governor's role in filling board vacancies and removing board members. As a result, board members are appointed solely by the Mayor of Baltimore City until the appointed/elected board established by the legislation is executed at the 2022 general election. Chapter 593 also established the Baltimore City Public School Board Community Panel (which the mayor must convene) and specified its membership. The purpose of the panel is to select nominees to be recommended to the mayor as qualified candidates for appointment to the board, including candidates for vacancies. If the mayor chooses not to appoint a member or to fill a vacancy from a list submitted by the panel, the mayor must reconvene the panel to submit additional names of qualified candidates. Beginning with the 2022 general election, the board will be restructured as a hybrid board with two members elected from the city at large, nine members appointed by the mayor, and one student member. Elected members will serve a four-year term and appointed members will serve a three-year term.

<sup>4</sup> Chapters 404 and 405 of 2021 added two new members to the Charles County Board of Education and altered the selection method for board members by requiring that eight board members be elected from the county commissioner districts (two from each of the four districts) and one board member be elected from the county at large. Previously, the seven board members were all elected from the county at large. All seats are subject to election in November 2022; however, the at-large member elected in November 2022 must serve a two-year term (instead of the usual four-year term) until a successor is elected to a full term in November 2024. Chapters 404 and 405 also provided the student member with voting rights, subject to certain restrictions.

<sup>5</sup> Chapter 569 of 2022 eliminated the role of the Governor in appointing members to the Harford County Board of Education. Instead, beginning with members appointed following the 2022 gubernatorial election, the Harford County Executive will appoint board members, subject to the advice and consent of the Harford County Council by a vote of at least five members. In appointing members to the board, the county executive must ensure, to the extent practicable, that the total makeup of the board reflects the gender, ethnic, and racial diversity of the county. Members appointed to the board following the 2022 election must serve for a term of two years until a successor is appointed and qualifies. Subsequent board members will be appointed following the 2024 presidential election and each presidential election thereafter.

<sup>6</sup> Although not in statute, the Kent County Board of Education reports that there is a nonvoting student member of the board and that the student member does not attend closed sessions.

<sup>7</sup> Chapter 217 of 2022 altered the membership of the Prince George’s County Board of Education by removing the four appointed members from the board. Effective July 1, 2024, the board will become an elected board that consists of nine elected members, each of whom must reside in and be elected from a different school board district, and one student member.

<sup>8</sup> Although not in statute, the Washington County Board of Education reports that there is a student member on the board and that the student member can only concur on votes and must abstain from certain matters.

Source: Sections 3-101 through 3-1405 of the Education Article; Local Boards of Education