

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 1090 (Senators Waldstreicher and Kagan)
 Education, Energy, and the Environment

Maryland Center for School Safety - Secure Schools Emergency Response Grant Program - Established

This bill establishes the Secure Schools Emergency Response Grant Program in the Maryland Center for School Safety (MCSS). The purpose of the program is to provide grants to local school systems to improve emergency notification systems and communication between public elementary and secondary school personnel, a public safety answering point (PSAP), and a public safety agency during emergency events. Local school systems that apply for and receive grants must use the funds to improve emergency notification systems or enhance communications within the school and with public safety agencies. By September 1, 2026, MCSS must ensure that the program is operating and available to each local school board. For fiscal 2026, the Governor may include an appropriation of \$4.5 million in the annual budget bill for the program. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures increase by \$4.5 million only in FY 2026. MCSS can otherwise implement the bill with existing resources. No effect on revenues.

(\$ in millions)	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	4.5	0	0	0
Net Effect	\$0.0	(\$4.5)	\$0.0	\$0.0	\$0.0

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

Local Effect: Local revenues and expenditures increase by \$4.5 million only in FY 2026 to the extent local school systems apply for and receive grants.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: An emergency notification system may include:

- a cellular phone application-based emergency event system with specified features;
- the capability to generate an automatic emergency alert notification to all public and nonpublic schools located in reasonable proximity to an emergency situation that is determined to be an imminent threat to school campuses or school personnel; and
- intercoms, public address systems, bidirectional antennas or boosters, and other technology that will improve emergency notification and communication, as identified by MCSS.

Current Law:

School Safety Grant Program

Chapter 14 of 2018 created the School Safety Grant Program (SSGP) to provide grants to local school systems for security improvements, including:

- secure and lockable doors for every classroom;
- an area of safe refuge in every classroom; and
- surveillance and other security technology for school monitoring purposes.

The Governor is required to include \$10.0 million in the annual operating or capital budget that may be used only to make grant awards (the program has been funded with general funds for the past three years). Statute provides the funding to the Interagency Commission for School Construction (IAC) and requires IAC to administer the program; however, under a memorandum of understanding, MCSS manages the grant awards process and IAC manages the program's finances.

Maryland's 9-1-1 System and the Maryland 9-1-1 Board

The State's 9-1-1 system operates primarily through PSAPs, which are generally owned and operated by local governments. 9-1-1 specialists working within PSAPs answer, redirect, and take action on 9-1-1 calls received based on the location of the originating 9-1-1 call. State and local governments are preparing for "next generation" 9-1-1 technology that will allow PSAPs to access not only more accurate information about caller location but also other information that will assist emergency personnel in communicating with callers and responding more efficiently. Legislation has been enacted in recent years to, among other things:

- transfer the Maryland 9-1-1 Board that is responsible for administering the 9-1-1 Trust Fund and overseeing the State’s 9-1-1 system from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services to the Maryland Department of Emergency Management;
- expand the uses of the 9-1-1 Trust Fund to include providing funding for 9-1-1 specialist training activities; and
- increase funding for the State’s 9-1-1 system.

The Maryland 9-1-1 Board’s other responsibilities include (1) dispersing funds to local governments from the 9-1-1 Trust Fund for authorized costs; (2) reviewing and approving or disapproving requests for reimbursement of the costs of enhancing 9-1-1 systems; (3) ensuring the inspection of PSAPs; (4) auditing counties to ensure that 9-1-1 Trust Funds are being used for authorized purposes; (5) establishing training standards for PSAP personnel based on national best practices and related to Next Generation 9-1-1; and (6) consulting with the Maryland Cybersecurity Council to establish cybersecurity standards for PSAPs.

State Expenditures: The bill authorizes the Governor to include an appropriation of \$4.5 million in the fiscal 2026 budget bill for the program. This analysis assumes that the Governor makes the authorized appropriation only in fiscal 2026. Therefore, general fund expenditures increase by \$4.5 million only in fiscal 2026 to provide grants to local school systems to improve emergency notification and communication systems. As the bill creates a program that is similar to SSGP, MCSS can implement the bill with existing resources.

Local Fiscal Effect: The bill authorizes local boards of education, in consultation with local law enforcement and PSAPs, to apply for grants from the program. To the extent they do and are awarded grants, local school system revenues and expenditures increase by as much as \$4.5 million in fiscal 2026.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: HB 1167 (Delegate Foley, *et al.*) - Ways and Means and Appropriations.

Information Source(s): Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems; cities of Baltimore and Havre de Grace; Montgomery and Talbot counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Department of Emergency Management; Maryland Municipal League; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Center for School Safety; Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Montgomery County Public Schools; U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 19, 2024
km/clb Third Reader - April 8, 2024
Revised - Amendment(s) - April 8, 2024

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