

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2024 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1395
Ways and Means

(Delegate Howard, *et al.*)

Anne Arundel County Board of Education - Ombudsman - Establishment

This bill requires the Anne Arundel County Board of Education to hire an ombudsman prior to the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. The ombudsman must (1) act as the liaison between the county board and members of the community; (2) assist community members in accessing services of Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) and other State and county education-related services; and (3) engage community partners and local organizations to advance the strategic goals of AACPS. The president of the board, in consultation with counsel for the board must negotiate the terms of the employment agreement for the ombudsman. The ombudsman must be subject to removal by the president of the board in accordance with the terms of the employment agreement. The ombudsman must receive an annual salary of \$120,000. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: AACPS expenditures increase by approximately \$155,400 annually beginning in FY 2025 to reflect the specified salary amount plus the cost of additional equipment and fringe benefits. County revenues are not affected. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Anne Arundel County Board of Education consists of seven nonpartisan elected members and one student member. The school board is one of 20 elected boards in the State, there are also four hybrid boards. AACPS adopted budget totaled \$1.65 billion in fiscal 2024. This amount includes all operating funds.

Local Expenditures: AACPS expenditures increase by approximately \$155,400 annually beginning in fiscal 2025 to reflect the specified salary amount plus the cost of additional equipment and fringe benefits. The school system advises that it provides fringe benefits at roughly 24.6% of salaries and wages, which equals approximately \$29,500 of the mandated \$120,000 salary amount. Additionally, the school system provides employees with an estimated \$3,400 for travel expenses and \$2,500 in supplies and equipment annually.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Anne Arundel County; Anne Arundel County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 4, 2024
km/hlb

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