

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2024 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Enrolled - Revised**

Senate Bill 1077

(Senators Corderman and Hester)

Budget and Taxation

Appropriations

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**Public Schools - School Security Employees - Appropriations**

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This bill expands the authorized uses of grants from the Safe Schools Fund to include school security employees. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2024.**

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. Expanding the authorized uses of the Safe Schools Fund has no effect on total revenues for or expenditures from the fund.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:**

*Safe to Learn Act*

Chapter 30 of 2018, the Maryland Safe to Learn Act, made comprehensive changes designed to improve the safety of the State's public schools. The remainder of this section summarizes relevant provisions of the Act.

*School Safety Subcabinet*

The School Safety Subcabinet consists of the following individuals or their designees:

- the State Superintendent of Schools;
- the Secretary of Health;

- the Secretary of State Police;
- the Attorney General;
- the Secretary of Disabilities; and
- the Executive Director of the Interagency Commission on School Construction.

The State Superintendent or designee chairs the subcabinet, and the Executive Director of MCSS provides staff.

The Act required each local school system, by June 15, 2019, and regularly thereafter, to conduct a safety evaluation of each public school under its jurisdiction. The purposes of the evaluations are to (1) identify and, if necessary, develop solutions for physical safety concerns, including issues with building security and (2) identify and evaluate any patterns of safety concerns on school property or at school-sponsored events.

### *Maryland Center for School Safety*

Chapter 372 of 2013 established MCSS as an independent unit within State government under the direction of a governing board chaired by the State Superintendent of Schools. Five years later, the Maryland Safe to Learn Act made MCSS an independent unit *within* MSDE and increased the mandated appropriation for MCSS's operations from \$500,000 to \$2.0 million annually. MCSS's duties include:

- assisting local school systems to identify resources and implement training for students and parents about relationship violence, identifying the signs of unhealthy relationships, and preventing relationship violence;
- analyzing data on School Resource Officers (SROs) and developing guidelines for local school systems regarding the assignment and training of SROs;
- certifying school safety coordinators;
- consulting with local school systems on safety evaluations;
- reviewing and commenting on school emergency plans; and
- reporting on life-threatening incidents that occur on public school grounds.

### *Safe Schools Fund*

The Safe Schools Fund is administered by the subcabinet, which must establish procedures for local school systems and law enforcement agencies to apply for grants from the fund. The purpose of the fund is to provide grants to local school systems to enhance school safety, as specified, and it may be used only for that purpose.

## *School Resource Officers and School Security Employees*

The Maryland Safe to Learn Act defines an SRO as (1) a law enforcement officer assigned to a school in accordance with a memorandum of understanding between a local law enforcement agency and a local school system or (2) a Baltimore City School Police Officer, as defined in current law.

Each local school system must file a report with MCSS that identifies (1) the public schools that have an SRO assigned and (2) if no SRO is assigned to a public school, the adequate local law enforcement coverage that will be provided to the school.

Annually, the Governor must include \$10.0 million for the Safe Schools Fund to provide grants to local school systems and law enforcement agencies to meet the SRO/law enforcement coverage requirements established by Chapter 30. Grants must be made based on the proportion of public schools in each jurisdiction.

A school security employee is an individual who (1) is not an SRO and (2) is employed by a local school system to provide safety and security-related services at a public school.

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### **Additional Information**

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

**Designated Cross File:** HB 1336 (Delegate Ghrist) - Appropriations.

**Information Source(s):** Baltimore City Public Schools; Baltimore County Public Schools; Maryland State Department of Education; Interagency Commission on School Construction; Maryland Center for School Safety; Maryland Association of Counties; Montgomery County Public Schools; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 21, 2024  
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Analysis by: Michael C. Rubenstein

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510