

Department of Fiscal Services  
Maryland General Assembly

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 282 (Senator Amoss, et al.)  
Economic and Environmental Affairs

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**Primary Education - Size of Classes - Establishment of Limitations**

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This bill establishes limits on the number of students that can be enrolled in primary school classes. The State Superintendent is required to establish waiver procedures.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Significant increase in local government expenditures. Revenues would not be affected. **This bill imposes a mandate on a unit of local government.**

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**Local Expenditures:** Data on the current enrollment in elementary school classes are not readily available. The Department of Fiscal Services estimates however, that each additional classroom would cost approximately \$64,300. This is based on the following:

- \$25,800 in salaries per teacher (median beginning teacher's salary in fiscal 1996);
- \$8,500 in fringe benefits (33% of teacher's salary); and
- \$30,000 for each portable classroom.

Based on a survey by the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) of school systems on the Eastern Shore, actual local school expenditure increases have been estimated for the following counties:

<u>County</u>	<u>Expenditure Increase</u>	<u>Fiscal 1996 School Budget</u>	<u>Percent Increase</u>
Cecil County	\$ 663,500	\$74,026,931	0.9%
Dorchester County	1,253,700	24,459,787	5.1%
Queen Anne's County	1,140,000	36,861,319	3.1%
Wicomico County	2,125,000	62,223,089	3.4%
Worcester County	<u>0</u>	34,785,75	0%
Total	\$5,182,200		

The projected \$5.2 million expenditure increase, represents a \$108,000 average cost for each of the 48 elementary schools in the five counties. If school conditions are similar throughout the State, local government expenditures could increase by \$86 million annually, which represents a \$108,000 increase for each of the State's 797 elementary schools.

The actual impact to local boards of education will depend upon the number of additional teachers and facility costs at each school. However, the estimated expenditure increase for Eastern Shore school districts ranged from 0% to 5.1% of the total school system's budget. Some school systems could offset a portion or all of these costs by altering the geographic attendance areas of schools that do not meet the proposed classroom size limits.

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**Information Source(s):** Maryland Association of Boards of Education, Department of Fiscal Services

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