

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly

**FISCAL NOTE**

House Bill 162 (Delegate Greenin. *et al.*)

Ways and Means

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**Education - Replacement of Maryland Criterion-Referenced Tests**

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This bill provides that national standardized tests shall be the only test used to measure student performance for evaluating educational accountability. The bill also makes the National Standardized Academic Achievement Test the standard for the State's minimum reading level requirement.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures could decrease by \$2.4 million annually. Revenues would not be affected.

**Local Effect:** None, assuming the State covers the costs of purchasing and scoring the national standardized tests.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Fiscal Analysis**

**State Effect:** Currently, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) uses a State developed assessment program known as the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) to evaluate educational accountability. MSPAP tests are provided on an annual basis to approximately 180,000 students in grades 3, 5, and 8. The tests measure school performance on how well students (1) solve problems cooperatively and individually; (2) apply what they have learned to real world problems; and (3) relate and use knowledge from different subject areas. Subject areas incorporated in the MSPAP tests are reading, writing, language usage, mathematics, science, and social studies. MSDE spends approximately \$4.2 million annually to develop and administer the MSPAP tests. The breakdown on the program's costs is illustrated below.

<b>Itemized Expenditure List</b>	<b>Actual FY 1998 Expenditures</b>
CTB/McGraw Hill - Publication of Test Booklets, Packaging, Distribution, Securing of Test Booklets and Documents, Data Processing, and Research	\$1,734,899
Task Development (Teacher Contracts, Copyrights, etc)	\$467,896
Westat - Field Testing	\$54,478
Measurements Inc. - Scoring Tests	\$1,937,990
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$4,195,263</b>

*Source: Maryland State Department of Education*

This bill would eliminate the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program and replace it with a national standardized academic achievement test. National standardized tests are estimated to cost \$10 per student for a total cost to the State of \$1.8 million. Since the State is currently spending approximately \$4.2 million annually on MSPAP, State expenditures would decrease by approximately \$2.4 million annually. This estimate assumes that the State will cover the cost of purchasing and scoring the national standardized tests.

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**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

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