

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 24 (Senator Middleton)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Student Teachers and Interns - Criminal Background Disclosure Form

This bill requires student teachers and interns whose program of study requires classroom experience in a public or private school to complete a criminal background disclosure form obtained through the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) before entering a field placement in a school setting.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Form design and set-up and printing costs for disclosure forms are assumed to be minimal and absorbable within MSDE's existing budget authorization.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Local school systems must conduct a criminal history record check on school employees who care for or supervise children or have access to children. MSDE advises that in actual practice local school systems conduct background checks on all school employees. While this bill would not require criminal background checks on student teachers or interns, school systems could use the disclosure forms to conduct such checks.

Background: Approximately 2,700 individuals graduate from approved teaching programs in Maryland each year. The Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board in 1997 convened a statewide task force to explore whether an undergraduate or graduate student

who is preparing to become a professional educator should obtain a criminal background check prior to working with students in a school setting. The board was concerned about the ethical responsibility that the education profession has for protecting students from individuals who have committed violent crimes. The task force recommended in a 1998 report that all undergraduate or graduate students in Maryland preparing for a profession in education whose program of study requires a clinical field experience should be required to complete a Criminal Background Disclosure Form before entering any field placement in a school setting. In addition, the task force recommended that all undergraduate or graduate students in Maryland preparing for a profession in education whose program of study requires an intensive/extensive internship or student teaching experience should be required to complete a Criminal Background Check before entering this experience.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: This bill was introduced in the 1999 session as SB 741 and HB 1159 and received an unfavorable report from the Senate Economic and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee, respectively.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board, Maryland Association of Boards of Education

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