

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2000 Session

FISCAL NOTE

House Bill 205 (Delegate Campbell)

Ways and Means

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Primary and Secondary Education - Fine Arts Programs

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This bill requires local boards of education to establish an instructional program in fine arts for all students in kindergarten through grade 8 and provide fine arts elective courses for students in grades 9 through 12. The bill codifies existing State regulations pertaining to public school fine arts programs.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** None. Local school systems are already required to provide an instructional fine arts program to students.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** Title 13A.04.16 of the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) requires each local school system to provide students with a fine arts program.

**Background:** In 1999, the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) conducted a review of local school systems' fine arts programs to determine the extent to which these programs were aligned to State standards. With two exceptions, every school system in Maryland has taken steps to begin aligning local fine arts curriculum guides to conform with the State's Essential Learning Outcomes (State standards). Public school fine arts programs include music, visual arts, drama, and dance.

Public school fine arts instructional programs vary across the State. On average, music and

visual arts programs tend to receive greater support from school and community leaders than drama and dance programs. There are about 1,700 music teachers and 1,600 visual arts teachers employed by local school systems compared to 85 drama and 35 dance instructors.

Elementary schools have on average one music instructor per 375 students. This ratio ranges from one music instructor per 280 students in Baltimore, Harford, and Howard counties to one music instructor per 920 students in Baltimore City. In addition, elementary schools have on average one visual arts instructor per 525 students, ranging from one instructor per 325 students in Garrett County to one instructor per 900 students in Baltimore City and Wicomico County. At the middle and high school levels, there is approximately one music instructor per 350 and 560 students, respectively; and one visual arts instructor per 415 and 330 students, respectively.

Most high school drama courses are performance-oriented and are taught by English teachers as an instructional class or after-school activity. Small and rural school systems usually offer one or two drama courses; whereas larger school systems usually offer a broader range of courses including laboratory sessions. Dance classes are offered in only a few school systems with five local school systems employing dance instructors.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

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