
By: **Delegate Taylor**
Introduced and read first time: February 9, 2001
Assigned to: Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education - Public Schools - Firearms Accident Prevention Program**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Board of Education to establish a certain
4 firearms accident prevention program for certain students to be implemented by
5 each county board of education; requiring the program to incorporate a certain
6 national firearms accident prevention program; requiring each county board to
7 implement the program; authorizing a county board to implement the program
8 in conjunction with certain local agencies; authorizing a county board to
9 implement a supplemental firearms accident prevention program; making a
10 stylistic change; and generally relating to a firearms accident prevention
11 program in public schools in the State.

12 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
13 Article - Education
14 Section 2-205(h)
15 Annotated Code of Maryland
16 (1999 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

17 BY adding to
18 Article - Education
19 Section 7-411.1
20 Annotated Code of Maryland
21 (1999 Replacement Volume and 2000 Supplement)

22 Preamble

23 WHEREAS, It is in the vital interests of the State of Maryland to prevent the
24 loss of children's lives to firearms accidents; and

25 WHEREAS, It is necessary to teach children that a gun is not a toy and what
26 they should do if they happen on an accessible firearm; and

27 WHEREAS, The Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program has taught gun safety to 15
28 million children of all grade levels free of charge through more than 20,000 school

1 systems, law enforcement agencies, and civic groups in all 50 states, Canada, and
2 Puerto Rico; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1996 the Youth Activities Division of the National Safety
4 Council, a nonprofit, nongovernmental, international public service organization
5 dedicated to improving the safety, health, and environmental well-being of all people,
6 awarded its Award of Merit to the Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program for its efforts to
7 "promote safety and health, save lives, lessen injury and reduce economic loss"; and

8 WHEREAS, The American Legion in 1995 presented the Eddie Eagle GunSafe
9 Program with its National Education Award, and in 1994 passed a resolution
10 recognizing the importance of the Program and encouraging its posts to introduce the
11 Program to local schools and law enforcement agencies; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1994 the National School Public Relations Association presented
13 the Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program with its Golden Achievement Award; and

14 WHEREAS, The National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement
15 Officers, a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to ensuring safe learning
16 environments and that provides national leadership in the effort to curb violence,
17 drugs, gangs, weapons, vandalism, and other threats to school safety and security,
18 passed a resolution endorsing "gun safety education for children that is promoted
19 through the Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program" and found that the Program "effectively
20 teaches youngsters what to do if they encounter a firearm"; and

21 WHEREAS, Twenty-one states have passed legislation recommending or
22 recognizing the importance of the Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program and twenty-three
23 governors have recognized the importance of the Program; and

24 WHEREAS, The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention under
25 the United States Department of Justice, at the request of then Attorney General
26 Janet Reno, prepared a report titled Promising Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence,
27 which included the Eddie Eagle GunSafe Program as one of only 60 programs selected
28 out of more than 400 programs reviewed, and listed the Program as an outstanding
29 education initiative and alternative strategy for prevention of firearms accidents;
30 now, therefore,

31 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF
32 MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

33 **Article - Education**

34 2-205.

35 (h) (1) With the advice of the State Superintendent, the State Board shall
36 establish basic policy and guidelines for the program of instruction for the public
37 schools.

38 (2) The policy and guidelines shall be printed in sufficient quantities to
39 provide copies to:

1 (i) Public school officials and teachers;

2 (ii) Private schools; and

3 (iii) Interested citizens of this State.

4 (3) The State Board [of Education] shall require the establishment of
5 criteria in each county for the selection of applicants for enrollment in public
6 secondary school career and technology education programs. Enrollment criteria
7 developed for this purpose shall ensure equal access to programs.

8 (4) (I) THE STATE BOARD SHALL ESTABLISH A PROGRAM OF
9 INSTRUCTION FOR A FIREARMS ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS
10 IN KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12 TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY EACH COUNTY
11 BOARD.

12 (II) THE PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION FOR A FIREARMS ACCIDENT
13 PREVENTION PROGRAM ESTABLISHED UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL
14 INCORPORATE THE NATIONAL EDDIE EAGLE GUNSAFE PROGRAM.

15 7-411.1.

16 (A) EACH COUNTY BOARD SHALL IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION
17 FOR A FIREARMS ACCIDENT PREVENTION PROGRAM ESTABLISHED BY THE STATE
18 BOARD UNDER § 2-205(H)(4) OF THIS ARTICLE.

19 (B) A COUNTY BOARD MAY IMPLEMENT THE PROGRAM IN CONJUNCTION
20 WITH A LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY.

21 (C) A COUNTY BOARD MAY IMPLEMENT AN ADDITIONAL FIREARMS ACCIDENT
22 PREVENTION PROGRAM THAT SUPPLEMENTS THE PROGRAM ESTABLISHED BY THE
23 STATE BOARD.

24 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
25 July 1, 2001.