

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2003 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 151 (Senator Kittleman, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Education - Resident Teacher Corps Pilot Program**

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This bill establishes the Resident Teacher Corps Pilot Program as an alternate route into the teaching profession and a method for attracting career-changers to the teaching profession. The State Superintendent of Schools must award a resident teacher certificate, valid for two years, to an applicant who: (1) holds a bachelor's degree or a higher degree with a concentration in a discipline appropriate to the curriculum that the applicant will teach; (2) attained a grade point average of at least 2.75 or its equivalent from an accredited institution of higher education; and (3) presents qualifying scores on the basic skills and required content teacher certification tests. The State Superintendent must award a professional certificate to a resident teacher who, after two consecutive years of satisfactory full-time teaching experience in a local public school system, presents a qualifying score on the pedagogy teacher certification test. The State Superintendent must report on the effectiveness of the program by June 30, 2006.

The bill is effective July 1, 2003 and sunsets June 30, 2007.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The Maryland State Department of Education could handle a switch from a program established in COMAR to a program established in State law with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** No direct impact on local finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** A similar resident teacher certificate program is established in COMAR. To qualify for a resident teacher certificate, an applicant must: (1) hold a bachelor's degree or a higher degree with a concentration in a discipline appropriate to the curriculum that the applicant will teach; (2) have received an average grade of "B" in the courses related to the area of assignment; (3) submit qualifying scores on the basic skills and content teacher certification tests; and (4) complete 135 clock hours of study prior to employment as a resident teacher. In order for a teacher to advance from a resident teacher certificate to a professional certificate, an applicant must: (1) complete an additional 45 hours of study for secondary school resident teachers or an additional 135 hours of study for elementary school resident teachers; (2) receive mentoring each year as a resident teacher; (3) provide verification of satisfactory teaching performance each year as a resident teacher; and (4) submit qualifying scores on the remaining teacher certification tests.

**Background:** The resident teacher certification program established in COMAR was adopted by the State Board of Education in 1990 and has been in effect since 1991. The program is designed to attract qualified liberal arts graduates and individuals who are changing careers. Presently, four public school systems use the program: Baltimore City and Howard, Prince George's, and Queen Anne's counties.

Enacted in January 2002, the federal No Child Left Behind Act requires all teachers to be "highly qualified" by the 2005-2006 school year, one of the more challenging mandates of the sweeping federal legislation. In effect, this means that all teachers must meet the State's professional certification requirements and must demonstrate a high level of competence in the subjects they teach. In October 2001, 9.8% of professional school-level staff (a group composed primarily of teachers) were provisionally certified, meaning they did not meet all of the requirements for professional certification. School systems use provisionally certified teachers when they are unable to fill vacant positions with professionally certified teachers. Provisional certificates are good for one year, and teachers holding the certificates are expected to work towards professional certification. To varying degrees, every school system in Maryland uses teachers with provisional certifications. The federal mandate will be most difficult to achieve in Baltimore City and Prince George's County, where 28.5% and 19.5% of school-level staff respectively were provisionally certified in October 2001. These percentages were considerably lower in the other 22 local school systems, where the proportion of provisionally certified staff ranged from 0.8% (Allegany County) to 9.3% (Charles County).

**State Fiscal Effect:** The major changes to the resident teacher certificate that would be enacted through this legislation are: (1) the elimination of the 180 to 270 clock hours of

study required for the existing certificate; and (2) the somewhat more stringent grade point average requirement established in this legislation. The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) advises that a shift from a program established in COMAR to a relatively similar program established in State law could be managed with existing resources. However, if the program grows substantially as a result of this bill, additional personnel at MSDE could be needed to track program applicants and participants.

MSDE would not need additional resources to comply with the bill's reporting requirements.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** The bill would not have a direct effect on local school system expenditures or revenues. Local systems would benefit indirectly, however, if the bill results in an increase to the number of available school teachers holding professional certification.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** A similar bill was introduced at the 2002 session as SB 588. The bill received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** HB 153 (Delegates Boschert and Cadden) – Ways and Means.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 3, 2003  
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