

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2003 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 863
Ways and Means

(Delegates Carter and Oaks)

Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners - Membership

This bill restructures the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners to include eight elected members, seven appointed members, and two student members. The elected and appointed members will be selected in November 2004 and begin serving in December 2004. The appointed and elected members serve four-year terms, and the student members serve one-year terms.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None.

Local Effect: Baltimore City school board expenditures would increase by an estimated \$65,000 in FY 2005 and \$127,000 annually thereafter due to the compensation and reimbursements provided to school board members. Revenues would not be affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The eight elected members will be selected at the 2004 general election, with seven members elected from seven school board districts established in the bill and one member elected from the city at large. The member elected at large will serve as the chairman of the board. The terms of elected members are staggered.

The seven appointed members will be jointly selected by the Governor and the Mayor of Baltimore City by November 15, 2004 and every four years thereafter. The bill also increases the number of student members on the board from one to two.

The bill also provides for the compensation of board members. The chairman of the board receives \$10,000 annually, and the other elected and appointed members receive \$5,000 annually. The student members may not receive compensation. All members, including the student members, are entitled to reimbursement for travel and other expenses.

Current Law: The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners consists of nine members jointly appointed by the Governor and the Mayor of Baltimore City and one student member. Appointed members serve staggered three-year terms and may not serve more than two consecutive terms. A student member serves a one-year term and is also limited to two consecutive terms. Members of the board elect a chairman and serve without compensation.

Background: In 1997, following a consent decree approved by the Baltimore City Circuit Court regarding the Baltimore City Public School System (BCPSS), the General Assembly passed legislation (Chapter 105 of 1997) establishing the Baltimore City/State Partnership and restructuring the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners. At the time, BCPSS was struggling with the poor academic performance of its students and questions about the system's administration and accountability. The partnership was created to improve the system through increased State oversight and the infusion of \$230 million in additional State operating aid from fiscal 1998 to 2002.

Chapter 105 of 1997 also required a final comprehensive evaluation of the school system by December 1, 2001. This evaluation was conducted by Westat and was presented to the General Assembly on January 17, 2002. Westat concluded that the partnership has worked well to improve student achievement and system management and recommended that the partnership continue. In addition, Westat recommended that BCPSS make a greater effort to engage teachers in the school reform movement.

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners is one of 11 appointed school boards in the State and one of two school boards, with the New Prince George's County Board of Education, jointly appointed by the Governor and the local chief executive. Another 12 local boards of education are elected, and one, the Worcester County board, is in the process of transitioning from an appointed board to an elected board. The largest school board in the State is in Baltimore County, and it includes 11 appointed members and 1 student member. The selection methods and number of school board members for the 24 local boards are shown in **Exhibit 1**.

Exhibit 1
Local Boards of Education
Number of Members and Selection Methods

	Full Voting Members	Appointed Members	Elected Members		Student Member(s)
			County At Large	From Districts	
Allegany	5	0	5	0	1
Anne Arundel	7	7	0	0	1
Baltimore City	9	9	0	0	1
Baltimore	11	11	0	0	1
Calvert	5	0	2	3	1
Caroline	5	5	0	0	0
Carroll	5	0	5	0	1
Cecil	5	5	0	0	1
Charles	7	0	7	0	1
Dorchester	6	6	0	0	2
Frederick	7	0	7	0	1
Garrett	5	0	2	3	1
Harford	7	7	0	0	1
Howard	5	0	5	0	0
Kent	5	0	5	0	0
Montgomery	7	0	2	5	1
Prince George's*	9	9	0	0	1
Queen Anne's	5	5	0	0	0
St. Mary's	5	0	1	4	1
Somerset	5	0	0	5	2
Talbot	5	5	0	0	1
Washington	7	0	7	0	1
Wicomico	7	7	0	0	0
Worcester	7	3	0	4	3

* In 2006 the Prince George's Board of Education will revert to an elected board, with four members elected from the county at large and five elected from five school board districts.

Local Expenditures: Members of the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners do not currently receive compensation or expense reimbursement. The bill proposes \$10,000 annual compensation for the board's chairman and \$5,000 annual compensation

for the other 14 board members, as well as expense reimbursement for all 17 of the board's members. The compensation costs total \$80,000 on an annualized basis. Assuming reimbursable expenses average \$3,000 per year for elected and appointed members and \$1,000 per year for student members, expense reimbursement costs would increase by \$47,000 on an annualized basis. In total, annual Baltimore City expenses would increase by an estimated \$127,000.

The full annual expenditure increase would not be incurred until fiscal 2006. There would be no cost in fiscal 2004, and the cost in fiscal 2005 would be approximately half of the annualized cost.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

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