

**Department of Legislative Services**

Maryland General Assembly

2005 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

**Revised**

House Bill 930

(Delegate Hixson, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Education - Youth Suicide Prevention School Program - Mental Health Programs**

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This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to seek federal funds for youth suicide prevention school programs under the Garret Lee Smith Memorial Act. Mental health programs that promote mental health awareness and encourage students to seek help as soon as it is needed are added to the suicide prevention programs that are eligible for State funding. In addition to existing requirements for local youth suicide prevention programs that receive State funding, local school systems that establish the programs must develop and implement mental health programs and peer-to-peer support to address the needs of students suffering from mental illness. MSDE may assist local school systems in implementing these programs.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** MSDE could pursue any federal funding available for elementary and secondary education from the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act with existing resources. MSDE currently works with school systems on suicide prevention efforts and could continue to do so with existing resources.

**Local Effect:** Local school revenues could increase if MSDE is successful in obtaining additional federal funding for youth suicide prevention programs. Local school expenditures could also increase, assuming MSDE would require a local match for the funding.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** MSDE must set eligibility guidelines for State funding of youth suicide prevention school programs and monitor and evaluate programs that receive State funding. The funding of the programs must be shared by the State and local school systems.

**Background:** The federal Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act was signed into law on October 21, 2004. According to available information, the Act authorizes \$82 million for youth suicide prevention programs at college campus mental health centers. MSDE reports that, to date, the federal government has not issued a request for proposals for funding under the Act. Furthermore, MSDE advises that the Office for Children, Youth, and Families assumed responsibility for youth suicide prevention efforts through the local management boards in the late 1990s. MSDE has not distributed funding for the programs since fiscal 1997, when approximately \$115,000 was allocated to 23 local school systems. According to MSDE, local management boards now operate local youth suicide prevention programs and do not distribute State funding to local school systems.

**State Fiscal Effect:** MSDE could seek federal funds under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act with existing resources, if any funds are available for elementary and secondary education. Available information indicates that the \$82 million in federal funds is authorized for mental health centers on college campuses.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** If the State is successful in receiving federal funds under the Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act, local school systems that apply for grants could receive additional revenues. In addition, it is assumed that MSDE would require a local match for the funding.

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## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 9, 2005  
mll/rhh Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 4, 2005

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