

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised

House Bill 1418  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Kaiser, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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Student Health - Maryland Obesity Awareness and Prevention Blue Ribbon Panel

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This bill establishes a Maryland Obesity Awareness and Prevention Blue Ribbon Panel to develop recommendations for a Maryland Obesity Action Plan. The panel must study the Nutrition and Physical Activity Statewide Plan developed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and evaluate the potential impact of specified obesity-reduction measures. An interim report is due by June 1, 2007 and a final report by June 1, 2008. MSDE and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) must provide staff support for the panel.

The bill takes effect October 1, 2006 and terminates September 30, 2008.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** MSDE and DHMH could staff the panel with existing personnel and resources. State officials appointed to the panel could participate and be reimbursed with budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** Local school personnel appointed to the blue ribbon panel could participate with existing resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Current Law:** School breakfasts and lunches supported by State and federal funds must meet specific nutritional standards. A public school vending machine that sells foods of

minimal nutritional value must use a timing device to automatically prohibit or allow access to the machine in accordance with nutritional policies established by the local board of education.

With the assistance of the local health department, each school system must provide adequate school health services, instruction in health education, and a healthful school environment. Additionally, each public school must have a program of physical education given in a planned and sequential manner.

**Background:** Numerous sources state that the percentage of children who are overweight has nearly tripled over the last 20 years. A National Conference of State Legislatures briefing reports that research on student performance and health suggests that academic achievement is positively correlated with nutrition and physical activity. According to a National Center for Health Statistics report, approximately 64% of adults age 20 and older are over-weight or obese.

Optional school nutrition standards have been approved by the State Board of Education, and several school systems have adopted versions of the standards. The State board's standards limit the foods that may be sold in elementary and middle school cafeterias. The standards also recommend that vending machines in schools be turned off until after the end of the regular school day.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** SB 457 (Senator Pinsky, *et al.*) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 21, 2006  
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