

CHAPTER 520

(Senate Bill 112)

AN ACT concerning

Prince George's County – Task Force on the Establishment of Vocational and Technical Education High School Academies

FOR the purpose of establishing a Task Force on the Establishment of Vocational and Technical Education High School Academies in Prince George's County; establishing the membership and staffing of the Task Force; requiring the members of the Task Force to designate the chair of the Task Force; requiring the Task Force to evaluate and make recommendations regarding certain issues; requiring the Task Force to submit a report to certain officials regarding its recommendations by a certain date; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing a member of the Task Force to receive certain reimbursements; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force on the Establishment of Vocational and Technical Education High School Academies in Prince George's County.

Preamble

WHEREAS, A disproportionately large number of students do not graduate from high school and may not be prepared for the workplace in Prince George's County; and

WHEREAS, A large percentage of students who do graduate from high school in Prince George's County do not go on to postsecondary education and instead directly enter the workforce; and

WHEREAS, It has been reported that the current Prince George's County public high school curriculum and method of teaching does not adequately prepare all students for meaningful and productive work; and

WHEREAS, There have been complaints from employers in Prince George's County that students are not adequately prepared for work; and

WHEREAS, There is a clear need for skilled workers in many industries and fields now located in Prince George's County or likely to move there; and

WHEREAS, There is a constitutional obligation that all students receive an adequate public education that prepares them for work and citizenship; and

WHEREAS, There is interest in the community in Prince George's County in exploring an alternative model for education for students who do not go on to postsecondary education; and

WHEREAS, There exists a need to identify research-based models that better prepare students for entry into the workplace and for lifelong advancement and learning; and

WHEREAS, There has been interest in the establishment of vocational and technical training academies in Prince George's County; and

WHEREAS, There is a need for a broad-based forum, with participation from many stakeholders, for the exploration of these topics in ways that lead to practical solutions; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That:

(a) There is a Task Force on the Establishment of Vocational and Technical Education High School Academies in Prince George's County.

(b) The Task Force consists of the following members:

(1) Two members of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(2) One member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(3) Three members appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the Prince George's County public school system;

(4) Two members appointed by the Prince George's County Executive;

(5) Three members appointed by the Prince George's County Council;

(6) Two members appointed by the Prince George's County Chamber of Commerce;

(7) Two members appointed by the Maryland State Superintendent of Schools;

(8) One member appointed by the Prince George's County Economic Development Corporation;

(9) One member appointed by the President of Prince George's Community College; ~~and~~

(10) One member employed by the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO who is familiar with union apprenticeship programs, appointed by the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO;

(11) One member appointed by the Metro Washington Chapter of the Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc.; and

(12) Two members of the Prince George's County Board of Education, appointed by the Chair of the Prince George's County Board of Education.

(c) The members of the Task Force shall designate the chair of the Task Force.

(d) The Prince George's County public school system shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force may not receive compensation for serving on the Task Force but is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force shall:

(1) Examine the needs of students in the Prince George's County public school system who are not completing high school to determine if they are being prepared for meaningful work and citizenship;

(2) Examine the needs of students in the Prince George's County public school system who are not going on to postsecondary education to determine if they are being prepared for meaningful work and citizenship;

(3) Explore whether the high school curriculum is contributing to the decisions of some students not to complete high school;

(4) Examine the workforce needs of the community, focusing especially on present and future opportunities for workers who are not college educated;

(5) Examine whether the current Prince George's County public high school curriculum meets the needs of students who are not going on to postsecondary education;

(6) Explore research-based alternatives to the current Prince George's County public high school curriculum that might better prepare students who are not going on to postsecondary education;

(7) Identify strategies and approaches that might better address the needs of students not going on to postsecondary education, including the feasibility of curriculum changes and the development of vocational and technical high school academies and other alternative instructional models;

(8) Identify legal, financial, regulatory, and organizational obstacles to the implementation of curriculum and instructional changes in Prince George's County public high schools, including the use of vocational and technical academies;

(9) Explore the willingness of stakeholders in Prince George's County to implement changes to curriculum and instruction in the county's public high schools; and

(g) On or before July 1, 2008, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor, Prince George's County Executive, Prince George's County Council, Prince George's County Board of Education, and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2007. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 1 month and, at the end of July 31, 2008, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 17, 2007.