

**Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2008 Session**

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
Revised**

House Bill 119  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Cardin, *et al.*)

Rules

**Education - Reporting Requirement - Class Size**

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education to develop, by the beginning of the 2011-2012 school year, a uniform data collection method to track the number of students who regularly participate in each classroom teacher's class as of September 30 of each year. Local school systems will then be required to implement the method and report the results to MSDE by November 1, and MSDE must report on the data by January 31 of each year.

**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures would increase by \$36,900 in FY 2011 to develop and implement a class size reporting method to be used beginning in fall 2011. Future year expenditure estimates reflect annualization, regular salary increases, and inflation. Revenues would not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	0	0	36,900	91,100	95,500
Net Effect	\$0	\$0	(\$36,900)	(\$91,100)	(\$95,500)

*Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect*

**Local Effect:** Local school systems could report class sizes in a format developed by MSDE with existing personnel and resources.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

## Analysis

**Current Law:** Although schools and school systems report student enrollments and teacher data to MSDE, reports on class sizes are not required.

**Background:** Maryland does not currently report class sizes. However, student-teacher ratios, which are not the same but may give some indication of school systems that have smaller class sizes, can be developed from data reported by MSDE. **Exhibit 1** compares the number of students enrolled as of September 30, 2006 to the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers reported for October 2006. From the two numbers, a student-teacher ratio is calculated and shown in the final column of the exhibit. The ratios range from a low of 12.2 students per teacher in Worcester County to a high of 16.6 students per teacher in St. Mary's County.

MSDE advises that there are a number of factors that complicate accurate reporting of class sizes. Some of the factors are discussed briefly below.

- Many schools use alternative scheduling techniques that separate small groups of students for more intensive services for a portion of the day while other students remain in larger groups.
- Elementary arts classes may include multiple grades or classrooms taught by a single teacher.
- Special education classes are typically smaller but may include students from multiple grades learning multiple subjects.
- Some classes may, at times, consist of a single student.
- In middle and high schools, students' schedules often change at the end of each semester or marking period, meaning class sizes may likewise change.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Public School Student to Teacher Ratios in Fall 2006**

<u>School System</u>	<u>Headcount Enrollment</u> <u>Sept. 2006*</u>	<u>FTE Teachers</u> <u>Oct. 2006</u>	<u>Students per</u> <u>FTE Teacher</u>
Worcester	6,830	560.9	12.2
Garrett	4,617	363.0	12.7
Somerset	2,941	230.8	12.7
Allegany	9,526	728.5	13.1
Wicomico	14,427	1,079.4	13.4
Kent	2,356	174.5	13.5
Howard	49,048	3,570.4	13.7
Dorchester	4,667	338.5	13.8
Baltimore City	84,515	5,925.0	14.3
Baltimore County	105,839	7,417.1	14.3
Montgomery	137,814	9,610.7	14.3
Cecil	16,421	1,139.4	14.4
Harford	39,568	2,740.1	14.4
Prince George's	131,014	8,876.5	14.8
Caroline	5,611	376.8	14.9
Anne Arundel	73,066	4,892.6	14.9
Talbot	4,398	294.4	14.9
Washington	21,594	1,437.1	15.0
Carroll	28,616	1,890.5	15.1
Frederick	40,224	2,583.9	15.6
Queen Anne's	7,786	491.0	15.9
Charles	26,623	1,633.7	16.3
Calvert	17,474	1,070.9	16.3
Saint Mary's	16,665	1,001.2	16.6
<b>State</b>	<b>851,640</b>	<b>58,426.9</b>	<b>14.6</b>

\*Includes students in prekindergarten through grade 12.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education

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**State Expenditures:** General fund expenditures would increase by an estimated \$36,920 in fiscal 2011, which accounts for the bill's requirement that the uniform data collection method be used beginning with the 2011-2012 school year. The estimate reflects the cost

of hiring one full-time education program specialist in April 2011 to develop the uniform class size data collection method and train local school system employees in the method. In future years, the program specialist would be responsible for refining the method, auditing school system reports, and ensuring compliance with the requirements. A salary, fringe benefits, contractual costs for developing and printing training materials, one-time start-up costs, and ongoing operating expenses are included in the estimate.

	<u>FY 2011</u>	<u>FY 2012</u>
Salary and Fringe Benefits	\$21,778	\$88,640
Contractual Services	10,000	0
Operating Expenses	<u>5,142</u>	<u>2,451</u>
<b>Total State Expenditures</b>	<b>\$36,920</b>	<b>\$91,091</b>

Future year expenditures reflect • a full salary with 4.4% annual increases and 3% employee turnover; and • 2% annual increases in ongoing operating expenses.

MSDE advises that attempting to collect class size data without automating the process would be imprecise and estimates that developing and implementing an effective and precise system would cost several million dollars. MSDE has added unique student identifiers to its data sets for the current school year and plans to continue modernizing its data tracking systems in the coming years. Assuming funding for the expansion of education information systems continues, developing the capacity to measure class sizes more consistently across school systems could be built into the new systems.

**Local Expenditures:** Although the bill would require additional administrative responsibilities for local school systems, it is assumed that the added responsibilities could be met with existing personnel and resources.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** Identical cross filed bills, SB 478/HB 439, were introduced last year. SB 478 was withdrawn following a hearing in the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, and HB 439 received an unfavorable report from the House Committee on Ways and Means.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Allegany County and Prince George's County Public School Systems; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 1, 2008  
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