

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1209
Ways and Means

(Delegate Simmons)

Education, Health, and Environmental
Affairs

Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005 - Sunset Repeal

This bill repeals the June 30, 2009 termination date on the Safe Schools Reporting Act of 2005.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2008.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Repealing the termination date would not materially affect State finances.

Local Effect: Local school systems could continue to comply with the Safe Schools Reporting Act beyond the current termination date with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: The Safe Schools Reporting Act is scheduled to terminate June 30, 2009. The Act requires local boards of education to report incidents of harassment or intimidation against public school students that occur on public school property, at school activities or events, or on school buses. An incident of harassment or intimidation may be reported by a student or the parent, guardian, or close adult relative of a student on standard Victim of Harassment or Intimidation Report forms created by the Maryland State Department of Education. Each local board must submit summaries of the forms to

the State Board of Education, and MSDE must submit an annual report with aggregate information collected from the forms.

Background: Under the Safe Schools Reporting Act, MSDE has compiled forms and submitted reports describing more than 3,200 incidents of harassment and intimidation that have been reported over the last two years. In the 2007 report, which describes incidents that occurred during the 2005-2006 school year, the rate of reported incidents per 1,000 students ranged from 0.1 in Baltimore City to approximately 20.7 in Somerset County as shown in **Exhibit 1**. Because the rates are higher for some of the school systems that have implemented systemwide and schoolwide programs on bullying prevention (including Somerset County), the report theorizes that the wide range in rates is largely the result of greater levels of bullying awareness in some school systems. According to the report, reported incidents peak during middle school ages (ages 11 to 14).

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 17, 2008
mll/rhh

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Exhibit 1
Number of Reported Incidents of Harassment and Intimidation
2005-2006 School Year

<u>School System</u>	<u>Reported Incidents</u>	<u>Pre-K - 12 Enrollment</u>	<u>Incidents per 1,000 Students</u>
Allegany	36	9,715	3.8
Anne Arundel	219	73,565	3.0
Baltimore City*	6	87,643	0.1
Baltimore	214	107,043	2.0
Calvert	189	17,468	10.8
Caroline	60	5,570	10.7
Carroll	241	28,940	8.4
Cecil	29	16,521	1.8
Charles	45	26,406	1.7
Dorchester	6	4,654	1.3
Frederick	250	39,672	6.2
Garrett	12	4,668	2.6
Harford	99	40,212	2.5
Howard	148	48,596	3.0
Kent	1	2,440	0.4
Montgomery	137	139,398	1.0
Prince George's	52	133,325	0.4
Queen Anne's	11	7,780	1.4
St. Mary's	52	16,649	3.1
Somerset	61	2,915	20.7
Talbot	20	4,482	4.5
Washington	64	21,141	3.0
Wicomico	195	14,903	13.5
Worcester	18	6,727	2.6
Statewide	2,165	860,433	2.5

*Only reflects the second semester of the school year.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education
