

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2009 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 257  
Ways and Means

(Delegates King and Rice)

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**Classroom Placement - Multiple Birth Children - Parental Discretion**

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This bill prohibits a local board of education from adopting a classroom placement policy that automatically separates or places together multiple birth children. The parent or guardian of multiple birth children may request that they be placed in the same classroom or in separate classrooms. A school must honor the requested placement unless the principal, in consultation with the children's teachers, determines that the requested placement is disruptive to the school. A school may recommend the appropriate classroom placement for multiple birth children or provide professional educational advice to assist a parent or guardian regarding placement for multiple birth children.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None. The bill is directed at public schools.

**Local Effect:** Public schools can accommodate parents' requests for placements of multiple birth children without impacting local school budgets.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** There are no statewide laws governing classroom placements for multiple birth children.

**Background:** Multiple births occur in approximately 1% to 2% of all births in the United States. The rate of multiple births has increased in recent years due, at least in part, to more frequent use of fertility treatments.

Since 2004, laws and resolutions authorizing the parent or guardian of multiple birth children to request the classroom placement of their children under certain circumstances have been enacted in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Texas. Bills with similar intentions have been introduced in several other states. Prior to this recent legislative action, many principals had adopted the policy of automatically separating multiple birth children.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** HB 837 of 2008 received a hearing in the House Ways and Means Committee, but the committee took no further action on the bill.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Association of Boards of Education; Mothers of Supertwins; National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.; WebMD, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 6, 2009  
mlm/mwc

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