

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

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

House Bill 987 (Delegate Riley)  
Ways and Means

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**Harford County Board of Education - Student Member - Voting Rights**

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This bill gives limited voting rights to the student member of the Harford County Board of Education; prohibits the student member from attending specified closed sessions of the board; and otherwise gives the student member the same rights and privileges enjoyed by appointed members of the board.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2009.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** None.

**Local Effect:** Assuming that the rights and privileges given to the student member do not include \$3,600 for travel and expenses related to board duties, Harford County finances are not affected.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** The student member must vote on all matters except those relating to:

- geographical attendance areas;
- acquisition and disposition of real property and matters pertaining to school construction;

- employment of architects to prepare construction or remodeling plans and specifications;
- donations of real property;
- acquisition of land by condemnation;
- consolidation of schools and transportation of students;
- appointment and salary of a county superintendent of schools;
- employee discipline appeals and other appeals;
- budgetary matters;
- appointment and promotion of school board staff;
- discipline of certificated staff;
- collective bargaining for certificated or noncertificated employees; and
- student suspension and expulsion.

Unless invited to attend by the vote of the majority of the county board, the student member may not attend a closed session addressing a matter on which he\she is prohibited from voting. The student member otherwise has the same rights and privileges as an appointed member of the board.

**Current Law:** The Harford County Board of Education consists of seven voting members appointed by the Governor. Each voting member serves a five-year term beginning July 1 after the member's appointment and until a successor is appointed and qualifies, and is entitled to receive \$3,600 annually for travel and other expenses related to the performance of board duties. Subject to board approval, a member may be reimbursed for additional travel and other expenses.

The policy manual of the Harford County Board of Education currently sets the policies regarding the student representative, or member, of the board. The student member of the Harford County Board of Education is a nonvoting member who acts in advisory capacity and as a liaison between the board and student constituents. The student member is chosen by members of the student councils of the county public schools, and serves a one-year term from July 1 to June 30 during his or her senior year of high school.

The student member may not attend hearings on suspensions or expulsions of students or hearings on the suspension or dismissal of professional school personnel. Unless invited to attend by a majority vote of the voting board members, the student member may not attend an executive session that relates to matters involving personnel or collective bargaining. The student member is compensated for expenses by approved vouchers.

**Background:** As shown in **Exhibit 1**, the majority of the 24 local school systems in the State have statutory provisions for the inclusion of a student member on their school boards. Of the 18 local school systems with provisions for student members, 12 have nonvoting student members, 5 have student members with limited voting rights, and 1 has a student member with full voting rights.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Local Boards of Education**  
**Statutory Authority for Student Membership and Voting Rights**

<u>County</u>	<u>Student Member(s)</u>	<u>Voting Rights</u>
Allegheny	1	Nonvoting
Anne Arundel	1	Full voting
Baltimore City	1	Limited voting
Baltimore	1	Limited voting
Calvert	1	Nonvoting
Caroline	0	
Carroll	0	
Cecil	1	Nonvoting
Charles	1	Nonvoting
Dorchester	2	Nonvoting
Frederick	1	Nonvoting
Garrett	1	Nonvoting
Harford*	1	Nonvoting
Howard	1	Limited voting
Kent	0	
Montgomery	1	Limited voting
Prince George's	1	Limited voting
Queen Anne's	2	Nonvoting
St. Mary's	1	Nonvoting
Somerset	0	
Talbot	1	Nonvoting
Washington	0	
Wicomico	0	
Worcester	3	Nonvoting

\* According to the Harford County Board of Education policy manual.

**Local Expenditures:** Legislative Services assumes that the rights and privileges afforded to the student member do not include entitlement to \$3,600 for travel and other expenses related to the performance of board duties during the student member's one-year term. Otherwise, Harford County expenditures increase by \$3,600 annually, beginning in fiscal 2010.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Harford County, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 1, 2009  
ncs/mwc

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