

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2010 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 439

(Delegate Kaiser, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Education - Innovative School Scheduling Models - Low-Performing and At-Risk
Public Schools**

This emergency bill requires the State Board of Education to explore the use of innovative school scheduling models, including extended year, year-round schooling, or other school scheduling models that do not allow for prolonged lapses in instructional time, in low-performing or at-risk public schools. The State board is also required to encourage local boards to use the school scheduling models that are determined to be most effective in enhancing student achievement in low-performing or at-risk public schools.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The State Board of Education, with the help of the Maryland State Department of Education, can explore school scheduling models without impacting its budget.

Local Effect: To the extent innovative school scheduling is more expensive than current school schedules, local school system expenditures may increase if they choose to implement innovative school scheduling models in low-performing or at-risk public schools.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Public schools must be open for 180 days and 1,080 school hours during a 10-month period. Under certain conditions (a natural disaster, civil disaster, or severe weather conditions), schools only have to be open for 1,080 school hours.

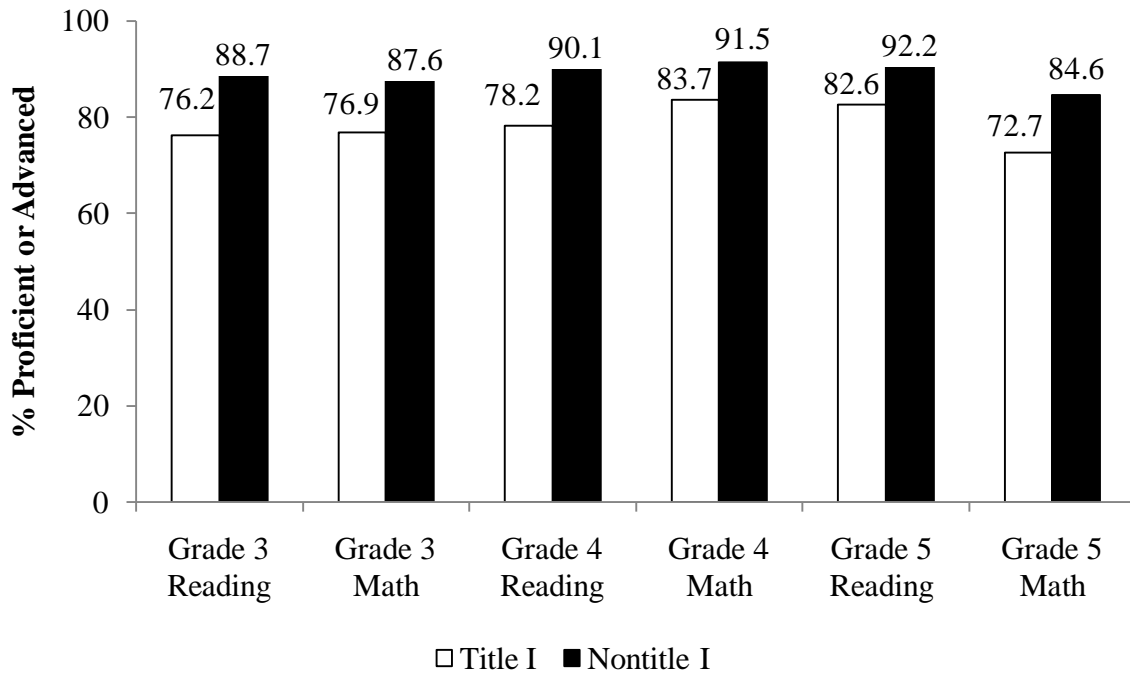
The State Board of Education must divide the school year into the terms it considers appropriate. However, certain local boards of education (*i.e.*, Allegany, Anne Arundel, Calvert, Howard, and Montgomery) and the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners may elect to operate one or more schools on a year-round basis, provided that the 180-day and the minimum hour requirements are met. In addition, any local board may conduct a year-round pilot study or program that is locally funded.

Background: Research shows that all young people are at risk of experiencing a loss of academic skills during the prolonged lapses of instruction during the summer months and that summer learning loss contributes to the achievement gap between low-income students and their more affluent peers. A recent study by The Johns Hopkins University found that two-thirds of the reading gap can be attributed solely to unequal summer learning opportunities. A comparison of proficiency rates on the Maryland School Assessments among elementary school students receiving Title I services (*i.e.*, low-income students) and students who do not receive such services is shown in **Exhibit 1**.

MSDE reports that it addresses the use of innovative school scheduling models that do not allow for prolonged lapses in instructional time in low-performing or at-risk public schools through its Breakthrough Center. In collaboration with local school systems, the Breakthrough Center seeks to support low-performing schools by developing customized solutions to turn around low-performing schools. Innovative school scheduling models may be one solution considered.

Local Effect: To the extent innovative school scheduling is more expensive than current school schedules, local school system expenditures may increase if they choose to implement innovative school scheduling models in low-performing or at-risk public schools. Charles County estimates that extending the school year from 180 days to 261 days will increase costs by an average of \$2.0 million per elementary school, by an average of \$2.7 million per middle school, and by an average of \$4.4 million per high school.

Exhibit 1
Percent of Students Scoring at the Proficient or Advanced Levels on Maryland School Assessments in 2009



Source: Maryland State Department of Education

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 452 (Senator Pinsky, *et al.*) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Charles, Frederick, and Somerset counties; Department of Legislative Services

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