

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2011 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**

Senate Bill 825 (Senator Currie, *et al.*)  
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

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**Education - Development and Review of Content Standards for Chess Instruction**

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This bill authorizes the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to develop and review content standards for chess instruction in public schools. If MSDE develops, reviews, and approves the content standards, a local board of education may implement the chess instruction in elementary, middle, or high schools.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** Authorizing MSDE to develop and review content standards for chess instruction in public schools does not affect State finances.

**Local Effect:** Authorizing a local board of education to implement chess instruction does not affect local finances; however, if a local school system chooses to implement a chess course expenditures may increase.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** Subject to the applicable laws and policies of the State Board of Education, each local board of education, on the written recommendation of the local superintendent, must establish curriculum guides and courses for the schools under its jurisdiction.

Teachers, specialists, and administrators in Maryland public schools and in approved schools operated by State agencies must hold a valid certificate appropriate to the field of employment. Certain nonpublic school personnel employed in special education

facilities must also hold a valid certificate appropriate to the field of employment. MSDE and the State Board of Education establish standards for certification; there is no specific certification for chess instruction.

**Background:** MSDE reports that it does not currently have an office in the Division of Instruction with responsibility for this type of curriculum nor the capacity to develop this type of curriculum; however, local school systems may currently offer instruction in chess if they choose and online curriculum in chess instruction is available free of charge.

MSDE administered the Chess in Maryland Schools grant program, which distributed approximately \$200,000 in grants annually for fiscal 2007 through 2009. Chess programs were able to apply for up to \$10,000 a year to support the development, implementation, and evaluation of their programs including purchasing curriculum and supplies, costs associated with training staff and volunteers, and costs associated with tournaments and a trip to enhance students' chess experience. Montgomery County reports that program was successful in increasing students' knowledge of chess and leveraging community support for chess programs.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** SB 528 of 2010 received an unfavorable report from the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Montgomery, Washington, and Worcester counties; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 6, 2011  
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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:  
(410) 946-5510  
(301) 970-5510