

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 1220
Ways and Means

(Delegate Haynes)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Secondary Education - Electronic Reader Pilot Program - Study

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to study the establishment of an electronic reader pilot program in public middle schools or high schools. By December 31, 2012, MSDE must determine whether to establish an electronic reader pilot program in public middle schools or high schools; and report its findings and recommendations to the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Ways and Means Committee.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2012, and terminates December 31, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. MSDE can conduct the required study using existing resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: MSDE must study the projected costs and savings from implementing a pilot program and whether there is an educational benefit to making available to students required reading lists and reading list materials on electronic readers in conjunction with school library staff. MSDE must also study whether to limit a pilot program to local school systems in which 65% of students qualify for the free and reduced-price lunch program; whether a pilot program would be most effective in middle schools or high schools; and whether minimum standards for a pilot program should include:

- encouragement and development of students' familiarity with electronic readers and training for teachers to integrate electronic readers use into their curriculum;
- the increased academic performance of the students participating in the pilot program; and
- evaluation indicators illustrating how teachers' familiarity with electronic readers and related teaching resources increases the performance of students participating in the pilot program.

MSDE must only consider the use of technology that meets the technical standards for electronic and information technology issued under Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1974, which requires electronic and information technology to be accessible to people with disabilities, including federal employees and members of the public.

Current Law/Background: There is no specific authorization for an electronic reader pilot program in Maryland. Basic commercially available electronic readers, such as the Kindle and the Nook, currently retail in the range of approximately \$80 to \$150.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City, Department of Budget and Management, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 14, 2012
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