

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 143

(Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
Committee)(By Request - Departmental - Education)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Ways and Means

Education - Comprehensive Master Plans

This departmental bill requires local boards of education to continue submitting annual updates to their master plans in 2012 through 2014 and delays the requirement that local boards of education submit new five-year comprehensive master plans from October 15, 2012, until October 15, 2015. Beginning in 2016, rather than 2013, each annual master plan update must cover a five-year period.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill does not substantively change the State's annual review of local school system master plans and master plan updates.

Local Effect: Delaying the submission of new comprehensive master plans and updates is not expected to materially impact local school budgets.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: Each local board of education must develop and implement a comprehensive master plan that describes the goals, objectives, and strategies that will be used to improve student achievement and meet State and local performance standards in each segment of the student population. Local boards of education are required to submit annual updates to their master plans through 2011. By October 15, 2012, each local board must submit a new five-year comprehensive master plan to MSDE. Beginning in 2013, each local board must submit an annual update that covers a five-year period.

Pursuant to Chapter 25 of 2010, local boards may submit a preexisting management plan in lieu of a comprehensive master plan or update. The State Superintendent of Schools must approve the management plan in lieu of a comprehensive master plan or update if the preexisting plan meets the requirements for the comprehensive master plan.

Background: The development of a comprehensive master plan by each local school system was one of the major accountability components of the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002. The Act required significant enhancements to State funding for public elementary and secondary education and gave local school systems broad discretion to use the added revenues for programs, initiatives, and enhancements that would best serve local student populations. The master plans were designed to ensure that the large infusion of funds would be used by each local school system on a focused set of identified strategies.

Local school systems were initially required to develop five-year plans and were required to update the plans annually during implementation of the Bridge to Excellence Act. Chapter 652 of 2007 then added two additional years of mandatory plan updates (fall 2008 and 2009). In addition, the legislation required school systems to develop new five-year master plans by fall 2010 and required annual updates to those plans that would likewise cover five years.

To allow the legislature to review the final report from the Bridge to Excellence evaluators before proceeding with the mandates for 2010 and beyond, Chapter 652 included a provision that required the General Assembly to revisit these decisions in 2009 to determine:

- whether the comprehensive master plan requirement for local school systems could be differentiated to reflect differing levels of progress in improving student achievement; and
- if local school systems could use preexisting comprehensive plans to satisfy the master plan requirement.

A provision that allowed local boards of education to submit preexisting management plans expired on July 1, 2009. The General Assembly let the expiration of the provision take effect but gave itself additional time before the fall 2010 submission to continue studying the issue.

A workgroup established by MSDE and including representatives from local school systems developed changes that were implemented by Chapter 25 of 2010. Chapter 25 delayed the due date for five-year comprehensive plans from October 2010 to October 2012. The delay was proposed out of concern that the reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the national standards movement may change federal education requirements. Chapter 25 also differentiated the master plan process with intent of reducing the administrative burden of developing all new master plans and to reward those systems that have been successful under existing plans. Adjusting the deadline for submission of plans and updates to local officials under Chapter 25 was intended to ensure that all test information is available before the plans and updates are submitted.

In August of 2010, Maryland was awarded a federal Race to the Top (RTTT) grant in the amount of \$250 million to be used over four years. MSDE receives \$125 million to support school reform, and the 22 participating local school systems collectively receive \$125 million.

MSDE advises that RTTT requirements will be fully implemented by 2015 and that accompanying Common Core assessments will be administered in the spring of 2015. Delaying the five-year master plan submission date until October 2015 should allow local school boards to align their plans with RTTT, Common Core assessments, and federal mandates related to a presumed reauthorization of ESEA.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 30, 2012
ncs/mwc

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ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

TITLE OF BILL: Education – Comprehensive Master Plans

BILL NUMBER: SB 143

PREPARED BY: Maryland State Department of Education

PART A. ECONOMIC IMPACT RATING

This agency estimates that the proposed bill:

WILL HAVE MINIMAL OR NO ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESS

OR

WILL HAVE MEANINGFUL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON MARYLAND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART B. ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

The proposed legislation will have no impact on small business in Maryland.