

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2012 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 185
Ways and Means

(Delegates Haddaway-Riccio and Eckardt)

Education - Talbot County - Participation in High School Athletic Programs

This bill allows a student who resides in the geographical attendance area of one public secondary school in Talbot County to participate in an interscholastic athletic activity at another public secondary school in the county if that athletic activity is not offered at the student's school. The student may participate in the athletic activity without transferring schools. A student's participation in an interscholastic athletic activity at another public secondary school in the county does not change the classification of either school under regulations and policies of the Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association (MPSSAA).

The bill takes effect June 1, 2012.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MPSSAA can make the required changes to regulations using existing resources.

Local Effect: Allowing a student who attends one high school to participate in athletic activities at another high school, if that athletic activity is not offered at the student's high school, will not directly affect Talbot County public school expenditures. However, if the Talbot County Public School System decides to transport students between schools to facilitate participation in interscholastic athletic activities, public school transportation expenditures will increase.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: According to the Code of Maryland Regulations, to participate in interscholastic athletics a student must be officially registered and attending a school that is a member of MPSSAA. Students may only represent the school in which they are registered and at which it is anticipated they will complete their graduation requirements. Ninth grade students who reside in the attendance area of a high school that includes grades 10 through 12 may participate in the interscholastic program of that high school. Students who legally transfer to another school through a change of residence or another action approved by the local superintendent of schools may participate in interscholastic athletics.

Background: Talbot County has two high schools: Easton High School, with 1,163 students, is classified by MPSSAA as a 2A school and St. Michaels Middle-High School, with 252 high school students, is classified as a 1A school. MPSSAA classifies schools using enrollment numbers. If the two Talbot County high schools were counted as one during the 2011-2012 school year, they would be classified as a 3A school. According to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), football, cross country, cheerleading, volleyball, indoor track, swimming, ice hockey, lacrosse (girls and boys), and track and field are offered as interscholastic athletic activities at Easton High School but not at St. Michaels High School.

MPSSAA's goal is to promote, direct, and regulate interscholastic athletics of the public high schools and ensure a safe and educationally balanced athletic program. It derives its authority from MSDE and the 24 local school systems. Currently, MPSSAA includes 195 public high schools, with over 114,000 student athletes participating in 24 sports.

Local Fiscal Effect: If the Talbot County Public School System decides to transport students between schools to facilitate participation in interscholastic athletic activities, local transportation expenditures could increase. St. Michaels High School is approximately 12 miles from Easton High School. It is assumed that if transportation is provided, students would be transported from their home school to the other school for practice and then transported back to their home school after practice. The actual cost will depend on the number of students from one high school (likely St. Michaels) who choose to participate in interscholastic athletics offered at the other high school (likely Easton) and local implementation decisions.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 257 (Senator Colburn) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - January 31, 2012
ncs/mwc

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