

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 Revised

House Bill 453  
 Ways and Means

(Delegate Walker, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Education - Maryland Center for School Safety

This bill establishes the Maryland Center for School Safety as an independent unit of State government to be based at Bowie State University (BSU). The Governor must provide \$500,000 in the annual State budget for the center. The center may establish three satellite offices at institutions of higher education as specified. The center must assist the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and local school systems in preparing an annual report that combines multiple school safety data systems into one format for public review and in incorporating new data points into existing data collection systems. By December 15 of each year, the center’s governing board must submit an annual report.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by at least \$500,000 annually beginning in FY 2014. Revenues are not directly affected. If the center receives a grant, higher education revenues at selected institutions of higher education will increase by 10% of the grant amount. **This bill establishes a mandated appropriation beginning in FY 2015.**

(in dollars)	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018
Higher Ed Rev.	-	-	-	-	-
GF Expenditure	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Net Effect	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)	(\$500,000)

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## **Analysis**

### **Bill Summary:**

#### *Satellite Offices*

The center may establish a satellite office at an institution of higher education located in each of the following regions: (1) the Eastern Shore; (2) Western Maryland; and (3) the Baltimore Region.

#### *The Governing Board*

The governing board consists of 11 members including 4 State officials or their designee; 2 members representing specified associations; a school psychologist or sociologist, appointed by the State Superintendent of Schools; and 4 members of the public, including at least a parent of a public school student, a representative of a nonpublic school, and a representative of school bus drivers, appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

The Governor must appoint a chair of the governing board from among its members. Board members appointed by the Governor serve at the pleasure of the Governor for three-year terms, and continue to serve until a successor is appointed and qualifies. A member may be reappointed, but may not serve more than two consecutive terms.

Members may not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the standard State travel regulations.

#### *Maryland Center for School Safety*

The head of the center is the executive director, who must be appointed by the governing board. The center may employ the additional staff necessary to carry out the center's functions as provided in the State budget.

The bill identifies 20 functions and duties of the center that provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to school safety, including developing a website containing a searchable database of school safety resources, assisting local school systems in conducting a thorough assessment of their school safety data, assisting local school systems with school building layouts and use of human resources for monitoring school safety measures, and assisting local school systems improve and monitor traffic control measures around schools to reduce the potential for accidents.

The operations of the center must be supported by funds as provided by the Governor in the State budget, grants or other assistance from local school systems, federal grants, and any other grants or contributions from public or private entities.

The governing board must distribute 10% of each grant received by the center in the manner specified. If the grant is designated for the center, the governing board must distribute equal amounts to BSU and to the institutions of higher education where satellite offices are located, if any have been established. If the grant is designated for the center office at BSU or for a satellite office, the governing board must distribute 10% of a grant to the institution of higher education where the designated office is located. If the grant is designated for a combination of offices, the governing board must distribute 10% of a grant to the institutions of higher education where the designated offices are located.

**Background:** At least 16 states have centers dedicated to school safety that serve as central locations for school safety information and provide schools with research, training, and technical assistance to reduce youth violence and promote safety. Many of these centers are integrated within the broader Center for Schools and Communities and recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The centers in Kentucky and Texas are located at state institutions of higher education and serve as a central location for the collection and analysis of school safety data.

While the structure varies among states, most school safety centers work to provide technical assistance, training, and clearinghouse resources to constituent school districts in their state. In addition, they serve as resource centers for state agencies, community and professional organizations, and policymakers within each of their states and collaborate in providing information and coordinated services.

Chapter 551 of 2011 (HB 79) established a task force to study the creation of a Maryland Center for School Safety. A final report with findings and recommendations was due by July 1, 2012, and was submitted in February 2013. The task force developed six recommendations that included the following:

- create a statewide system to integrate and address the many facets of school safety and provide technical assistance at the State and local levels to incorporate school safety into school improvement and reform efforts;
- identify the data that must be collected and then establish a process to ensure it is consistently reported and collected across the State in order to accurately diagnose challenges, assemble effective solutions, and measure degree of impact;

- build a partnership with critical State and local stakeholders (including parents; teachers; community organizations; higher education; law enforcement; emergency responders; businesses; and local government, healthcare, and services providers) to establish plans for the implementation and oversight of adopted task force recommendations and the realignment of resources to address the needs of students, families, and schools in an efficient and effective manner;
- use data to understand the real challenges in creating and maintaining a safe learning environment, as opposed to the perceived challenges, and provide opportunities for teachers, parents, students, and administrators to develop or improve the skills, knowledge, and conditions that will address the challenges and contribute to a safe learning environment;
- support the implementation and alignment of policies, procedures, and codes with fiscal and human resources; proven-effective programs and practices; and mechanisms for ensuring differentiation, efficient execution, and evaluation; and
- maintain a working group to integrate the work of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Guidelines related to Unsafe School Choice of the Task Force.

Recommendation six of the task force included a sub-recommendation for the allocation of funding to establish an independent entity to function as the Center for School Safety which would provide technical assistance to schools participating in the tiered system for identifying and supporting persistently dangerous schools, and those exhibiting the potential to become persistently dangerous schools. *The Supplement to the Report: Task Force on School Safety* estimated costs at \$2 million to \$4 million for start up, maintenance, and salaries on the basis of actual costs of a similar model in another state. However, the *Report of the Task Force to Study the Creation of a Maryland Center for School Safety* indicated that to initially fund the creation of such a center in Maryland, State expenditures could total approximately \$470,000 annually over a course of five years.

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Education awarded MSDE a \$3.1 million Safe and Supportive School grant to help measure school safety at the building level and assist in helping those schools with the greatest safety needs. The Governor's proposed 2014 capital budget includes \$25 million for statewide public school security improvements.

**State Fiscal Effect:** Pursuant to this legislation, the Governor is required to provide \$500,000 in the annual State budget for the center. Accordingly, general fund expenditures increase by \$500,000 annually beginning in fiscal 2014. The bill establishes a mandated appropriation beginning in fiscal 2015.

The Governor's proposed fiscal 2014 budget includes \$500,000 for the Maryland State Police to operate a Center for School Safety located at the Maryland Coordination and Analysis Center, which is a joint operation center of the federal, State, and local law enforcement and emergency services agencies.

If the center receives a grant, higher education revenues at selected institutions of higher education will increase by 10% of the grant amount.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Department of Budget and Management, Maryland State Department of Education, Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, University System of Maryland, Baltimore City, Montgomery County, Kentucky Center for School Safety, Texas School Safety Center, Washington State Safety Center; Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

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