

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1209
Ways and Means

(Delegate Hixson, *et al.*)

Education - Health and Safety - School Wellness Committees

This bill requires each local board of education to establish a wellness committee to (1) discuss issues relating to the physical, mental, and social health and well-being of students and (2) make recommendations to the local board based on committee discussions and deliberations. The bill specifies the individuals and entities that must be included as part of a wellness committee. A member of each local board's committee must be a resident of, or employed in, the county in which the local board is located. At least half of the committee members must be parents of public school students. Meetings of each committee must be open to the public and provide opportunity for public testimony. Each local board of education may adopt regulations to carry out provisions of the bill.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2015.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill affects local boards of education.

Local Effect: Local boards of education may incur minimal increases in expenditures to accommodate meetings of the required wellness committees. The bill does not require compensation for committee members in any form (including compensation for travel expenses). Local revenues are not affected.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: The Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act of 2004 required local education agencies (LEAs) to establish a local school wellness policy (LWP) by the 2006 school year that set goals for nutrition education, physical activity, and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness. It also required LEAs to include nutrition guidelines for all food available on the school campus during the school day and to insure that parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public are involved in developing the LWP.

The federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, among other provisions, required the LWP to include nutrition promotion and requires that teachers of physical education and school health professionals participate in the development of the LWP. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently proposed federal regulations to implement these and related provisions of the 2010 law.

Local Fiscal Effect: Local boards of education may incur increases in expenditures to accommodate meetings of the required wellness committees. However, under current law various stakeholders must be engaged in the formulation of the LWP; therefore it is anticipated that any increase in local expenditures compared to current practice will be minimal. The bill does not require compensation for committee members in any form, including compensation for travel or other expenses related to committee activities. The frequency of wellness committee meetings will also affect expenditures; it is assumed that local boards, through regulations, can address the number of times the committees are to meet each year.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 506 (Senator Young, *et al.*) - Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

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min/rhh

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