

## Chapter 266

**(House Bill 429)**

AN ACT concerning

**Task Force to Combat Habitual Student Truancy**

FOR the purpose of establishing the Task Force to Combat Habitual Student Truancy; providing for the composition, chair, and staffing of the Task Force; prohibiting a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation, but authorizing the reimbursement of certain expenses; requiring the Task Force to study and make recommendations regarding certain matters relating to habitual student truancy; requiring the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on or before a certain date; providing for the termination of this Act; and generally relating to the Task Force to Combat Habitual Student Truancy.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That:

- (a) There is a Task Force to Combat Habitual Student Truancy.
- (b) The Task Force consists of the following members:
  - (1) one member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;
  - (2) one member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;
  - (3) the Attorney General of Maryland, or the Attorney General's designee;
  - (4) ~~one member of the Judiciary, appointed by the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals;~~
  - ~~(5)~~ the Secretary of Juvenile Services, or the Secretary's designee;
  - ~~(6)~~ (5) the Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene, or the Secretary's designee;
  - ~~(7)~~ (6) the Secretary of Human Resources, or the Secretary's designee;
  - ~~(8)~~ (7) ~~the State Superintendent of Schools, or the Superintendent's designee~~ one representative of Morgan State University, appointed by the President of the University;

~~(9)~~ (8) one representative of the Maryland Association of Community Colleges, appointed by the Executive Director of the Association;

~~(10)~~ (9) one representative of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education, appointed by the Executive Director of the Association;

~~(11)~~ (10) one representative of the Public School Superintendents Association of Maryland, appointed by the Executive Director of the Association;

~~(12)~~ (11) one representative of the Maryland State Education Association, appointed by the Executive Director of the Association;

~~(13)~~ (12) one representative of the Maryland Association of Pupil Personnel, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(14)~~ (13) one representative of the Maryland School Psychologists' Association, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(15)~~ (14) one representative of the Maryland School Counselor Association, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(16)~~ (15) one representative of the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(17)~~ (16) one representative of the Maryland Association of Elementary School Principals, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(18)~~ (17) one representative of the Maryland Parent Teacher Association, appointed by the President of the Association;

~~(19)~~ (18) one representative of the Advocates for Children and Youth, appointed by the Executive Director of the organization;

~~(20)~~ (19) one representative of the Maryland Center for School Safety, appointed by the Executive Director of the organization; ~~and~~

~~(21)~~ (20) one representative of the Y of Central Maryland, appointed by the Chief Executive Officer of the organization; and

(21) one representative of the Student Services and Strategic Planning Branch of the State Department of Education, appointed by the Executive Director of the Student Services and Strategic Planning Branch.

(c) The State Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designee member who is a representative of Morgan State University shall chair the Task Force.

(d) ~~The State Department of Education~~ Morgan State University shall provide staff for the Task Force.

(e) A member of the Task Force:

(1) may not receive compensation as a member of the Task Force; but

(2) is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(f) The Task Force shall:

(1) study and assess how the structure and effectiveness of the State's existing truancy courts can be improved;

(2) study the State's chronic student absentee rates and assess whether chronic student absenteeism influences student truancy rates;

(3) identify best practices regarding:

(i) how records relating to student absences are gathered and maintained; and

(ii) the proper time a pupil personnel worker should be notified of a student's chronic absenteeism or habitual truancy;

(4) determine methods of encouraging State agencies to work collaboratively to reduce habitual student truancy;

(5) determine whether the following actions would be helpful in combating habitual student truancy:

(i) requiring each local school system to provide evening high school programs;

(ii) revamping current admissions policies to alternative programs;

(iii) expanding the Child in Need of Supervision pilot program to all counties in the State; and

(iv) allowing school personnel to file a Child in Need of Assistance petition with the appropriate court; and

(6) make recommendations on how best to combat habitual student truancy in the State.

(g) On or before July 1, 2017, the Task Force shall report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1246 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2016. It shall remain effective for a period of 2 years and, at the end of June 30, 2018, with no further action required by the General Assembly, this Act shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

**Approved by the Governor, April 26, 2016.**