

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2016 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 921  
Ways and Means

(Delegate Fraser-Hidalgo, *et al.*)

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**Primary and Secondary Education - School Personnel - Training Requirement**

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This bill requires the State Board of Education to require, beginning on or before July 1, 2017, all school personnel to complete training each year in the skills required to understand and respond to the social, emotional, and personal development of students, including specified knowledge and skills. The training must be by a method determined by the State board after consultation with the Professional Standards and Teacher Education Board (PSTEB). The training must be provided to school personnel during an in-service program, or a professional development requirement that may be met during time designated for professional development. Likewise, by July 1, 2016, a certificate holder applying for renewal of a certificate as a school counselor must have obtained training in the knowledge and skill required to understand and respond to, the social, emotional, and personal development of students, including specified knowledge and skills. This training must be commensurate with the duties of a school counselor and may exceed the training required of other school personnel.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2016.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** The State Board of Education can designate a method of training and develop regulations using existing resources.

**Local Effect:** Local school system expenditures may increase significantly to provide all school personnel with the required training each year. **This bill may impose a mandate on a unit of local government.**

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## **Analysis**

**Bill Summary:** Specifically, all school personnel must be trained in the knowledge and skills relating to (1) the recognition of indicators of mental illness and behavioral distress, including depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse and (2) the identification of professional resources to help students in a crisis. The State Board of Education must adopt regulations to implement the bill.

**Current Law:** School personnel is not defined in statute.

By July 1, 2016, PSTEB must require a school counselor applying for renewal of a certificate to have obtained, by a method determined by PSTEB, skills required to understand and respond to the social, emotional, and personal development of students, including knowledge and skills relating to (1) the recognition of indicators of mental illness and behavioral distress, including depression, trauma, violence, youth suicide, and substance abuse and (2) the identification of professional resources to help students in crisis.

Recommendations on rules and regulations that are initiated by PSTEB must be implemented unless disapproved by three-fourths of the members of the State Board of Education. Recommendations on rules and regulations that are initiated by the State Board of Education must be implemented unless disapproved by PSTEB. If the rules and regulations are disapproved, the rules and regulations must be implemented if they are approved by three-fourths of the members of the State board.

The right of a school psychologist, who is certified by PSTEB to practice school psychology consistent with provisions of that certification, may not be limited by the Health Occupations Article with respect to the practice of school psychology in an education institution.

According to the Code of Maryland Regulations, there are five options to become a certified school counselor. In general, an applicant must have a master's degree in school counseling or school guidance from an eligible program and two years of satisfactory performance as a teacher or school counselor; however, there are exceptions to these requirements under the various options. Colleges and universities in Maryland are approved under standards set forth by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs, which include standards for addiction counseling and school counseling. Every five years, school counselors must renew their certification by presenting six credits from an institution of higher education.

A "school psychologist" is defined as an individual who is certified to provide psychological services to children in a public or State-approved nonpublic school setting.

The school psychologist supervises interns and psychometrists. To become a school psychologist an individual must meet one of the following conditions: (1) have an advanced degree in psychology from an approved program and qualifying scores on the State-approved test for school psychologists; (2) have an advanced degree in either psychology, education, or human development and complete 60 semester hours of specified graduate course work; or (3) have a valid Nationally Certified School Certified School Psychologist certificate. In addition, applicants must meet experience conditions.

To obtain certification as a school social worker, the applicant must be licensed by the Maryland Board of Social Work Examiners as a graduate social worker, certified social worker, or a certified social worker-clinical.

Regulations require a planned, systematic program of counseling, consulting, appraisal, information, and placement services for students in prekindergarten through grade 12.

**Background:** According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, up to one in five children experience a diagnosable mental health disorder in a given year. Behavioral and emotional issues can act as a barrier to academic success and high school graduation, as well as create disciplinary and attendance problems in school. In addition, research indicates that school mental health programs can improve educational outcomes by decreasing absences, decreasing discipline referrals, and improving test scores.

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) advises that the Mental Health Association of Maryland is currently working with MSDE to deliver training similar to that required by the bill under the Project Advancing Wellness and Resilience grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This training, [Youth Mental Health First Aid](#), is designed for personnel who work with adolescents and takes 8 hours and serves no more than 30 participants at a time.

**Local Expenditures:** Local school system expenditures may increase significantly to provide all school personnel with the required training in understanding and responding to the social, emotional, and personal development of students each year. All local school systems have professional development days, and a professional development budget; thus, the local school system expenditures will only increase if the required training cannot be accommodated within the current professional development budget and schedule. However, since the training is required annually for all school personnel, it is assumed that local school system expenditures may increase. These costs may be absorbable within local budgets.

*For illustrative purposes only*, based on the training costs for Youth Mental Health First Aid, local school system expenditures increase by \$6.2 million per year based on the estimated number of school personnel in each school system. According to MSDE, the training for the Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed for personnel who work with adolescents. The training takes eight hours and serves no more than 30 participant at a time. A Youth Mental Health First Aid instructor costs \$1,500 per day, and the cost of the accompanying resources book is \$18 per person. The estimated cost per local school system based on these costs is shown in **Exhibit 1**. To the extent that local school system staff can be trained to be instructors or local training is developed, actual costs may be significantly less than those shown in Exhibit 1. The estimate assumes school personnel, which is not defined in the bill, includes all school system employees except support staff. To the extent that school personnel does not include central office staff, costs may also be significantly less. Actual costs will depend on the requirements developed by the State Board of Education, which cannot be reliably estimated at this time.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Estimated Annual Cost for Youth Mental Health First Aid Training**

<b><u>Local School System</u></b>	<b><u># of School Staff</u></b>	<b><u># of Classes of 30</u></b>	<b><u>Instructor Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Book Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Total Cost</u></b>
Allegany	953	32	\$48,000	\$17,154	\$65,154
Anne Arundel	7,982	267	400,500	143,676	544,176
Baltimore City	8,427	281	421,500	151,686	573,186
Baltimore	10,635	355	532,500	191,430	723,930
Calvert	1,610	54	81,000	28,980	109,980
Caroline	645	22	33,000	11,610	44,610
Carroll	2,713	91	136,500	48,834	185,334
Cecil	1,665	56	84,000	29,970	113,970
Charles	2,852	96	144,000	51,336	195,336
Dorchester	579	20	30,000	10,422	40,422
Frederick	4,275	143	214,500	76,950	291,450
Garrett	421	15	22,500	7,578	30,078
Harford	4,055	136	204,000	72,990	276,990
Howard	6,734	225	337,500	121,212	458,712
Kent	235	8	12,000	4,230	16,230
Montgomery	15,975	533	799,500	287,550	1,087,050
Prince George's	12,791	427	640,500	230,238	870,738
Queen Anne's	777	26	39,000	13,986	52,986
St. Mary's	1,669	56	84,000	30,042	114,042
Somerset	382	13	19,500	6,876	26,376
Talbot	469	16	24,000	8,442	32,442
Washington	2,279	76	114,000	41,022	155,022
Wicomico	1,781	60	90,000	32,058	122,058
Worcester	948	32	48,000	17,064	65,064
<b>Total</b>	<b>90,852</b>	<b>3,040</b>	<b>\$4,560,000</b>	<b>\$1,635,336</b>	<b>\$6,195,336</b>

Note: School staff is estimated by subtracting "support staff" from total staff employed by the local school system. "Support staff" includes technicians, service workers, secretaries and clerks, drivers, etc.

Source: Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Legislative Services

## **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Mental Health First Aid USA, Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 10, 2016  
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