

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2016 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**Third Reader - Revised**

Senate Bill 1173

(Senator Pugh, *et al.*)

Finance

Economic Matters and Ways and Means

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**Task Force to Study the Adult High School Concept**

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This bill establishes a Task Force to Study the Adult High School Concept, staffed by the Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (DLLR) and the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The task force must study and identify best practices relating to eligibility requirements, financial stability, capacity standards, accreditation, reporting requirements, data collection, matriculation requirements, curriculum content and requirements, funding requirements and options, and any other issues relevant to the development of the adult high school concept. The task force must make recommendations regarding enabling legislation and regulations for the establishment and regulation of adult high schools, and the task force must submit its findings and recommendations in an interim report to the General Assembly and specified committees by December 15, 2016. The bill specifies the membership of the task force and requires it to submit a final report on its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly and specified committees by June 30, 2017.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2016, and terminates on June 30, 2017.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** DLLR and MSDE can provide staff support to the task force with existing budgeted resources. Any expense reimbursements for task force members are presumed to be minimal and absorbable within existing budgeted resources. No effect on revenues.

**Local Effect:** None.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Current Law:** Adult Education and Literacy Services was transferred from MSDE to DLLR by Chapter 134 of 2008. Its mission is to provide leadership for the establishment of adult education goals, oversight for implementation of the federal Adult Education State Plan, and administration of the statewide general equivalency development (GED). The Adult Education and Literacy Program delivers literacy and English language instruction and high school diploma options for adults and out-of-school youth. The office oversees Maryland's Adult Instructional Services and GED testing programs. Instructional programs include Adult Basic Education; Adult Secondary Education, including GED test preparation and the National External Diploma Program; English for Speakers of Other Languages; English Literacy/Civics Education; Family Literacy; and Workplace Education.

The Adult Education and Literacy Services Office must distribute competitive grants for adult education and literacy services in accordance with the State plan for adult education and family literacy. These grants may be used for adult education and literacy services including (1) GED instruction; (2) the Maryland Adult External High School Program; (3) Workplace Literacy Services; (4) English for speakers of other languages; (5) family literacy; and (6) literacy instruction. DLLR must compile a list by county of adult education and literacy services offered to the public.

A Maryland resident may obtain a high school diploma by examination through the Maryland Adult External High School Program. To qualify, an individual must be at least age 16 and may not have already obtained a high school certificate or diploma. The individual must also have officially withdrawn from a regular public or private school. Maryland administers the National Adult External Program, an alternative option for adults to earn a high school diploma, offered by the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems. The State Board of Education issues Maryland high school diplomas to students who meet the requirements.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into federal law on July 22, 2014, replacing the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998. WIOA became effective July 1, 2015, and the State has until July 1, 2016, to conform to WIOA. WIOA is designed to help job seekers access the employment, education, training, and support services needed to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy. WIOA supersedes WIA of 1998 and amends the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## Additional Information

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** HB 1406 (Delegate Clippinger, *et al.*) - Economic Matters and Ways and Means.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland State Department of Education; Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 18, 2016  
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