

Department of Legislative Services  
 Maryland General Assembly  
 2017 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
 First Reader

House Bill 1264 (Delegate Conaway)  
 Ways and Means

Dyslexia Education Pilot Program Advisory Board

This bill establishes a 13-member Dyslexia Education Pilot Program Advisory Board in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). The advisory board must implement the Dyslexia Education Pilot Program for a six-year period and establish a process to select local school systems to participate in the pilot program, in consultation with specified entities. In addition, the advisory board must in consultation with specified entities (1) identify a principal investigator for the Dyslexia Education Pilot Program; (2) establish a pilot program implementation team; (3) select an institution of higher education and any private foundation (as appropriate) to partner with the pilot program; (4) and determine funding for the pilot program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2017, and terminates June 30, 2024.

Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** General fund expenditures increase by approximately \$590,000 in FY 2018, by \$2.2 million in FY 2019, and by over \$2.8 million in FY 2020 and 2021; expenditure increases decline to \$152,000 by FY 2022 and end after FY 2023. However, to the extent that federal funding can be garnered to support the pilot program or local funds are provided, the general fund is relieved of some or all of these costs.

(in dollars)	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
GF Expenditure	589,700	2,226,600	2,850,100	2,856,000	152,500
Net Effect	(\$589,700)	(\$2,226,600)	(\$2,850,100)	(\$2,856,000)	(\$152,500)

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

**Local Effect:** It is assumed that State funds absorb the costs associated with the participation of two local school systems in the pilot program, based on the assumptions

discussed below. To the extent that the school systems provide funding to cover a portion of the costs, local expenditures increase.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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## Analysis

**Bill Summary:** The advisory board includes the State Superintendent of Schools (or designee) and 12 members appointed by the Governor, who designates the chair of the advisory board. Advisory board members do not receive compensation but are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses.

The advisory board must, in consultation with MSDE, develop a request for proposals (RFP) to select the principal investigator and circulate the RFP to certain specified entities. The principal investigator must be a research scientist in reading and dyslexia, have had teacher training, and have participated in the implementation of a pilot program.

MSDE must provide staff for the advisory board. By December 30 each year, the advisory board must report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the progress of the implementation of the pilot program.

**Current Law/Background:** Dyslexia is characterized by an unexpected difficulty in reading in individuals who otherwise possess the intelligence and motivation needed for accurate and fluent reading. An often cited *New England Journal of Medicine* article indicates that the prevalence of dyslexia among school-age children in the United States is estimated to range from 5% to 17%.

Chapter 411 of 2015 established the Task Force to Study the Implementation of a Dyslexia Education Program charged with determining current practices for identifying and treating dyslexia in students in Maryland public schools and in other states; determining the appropriate structure for establishing a dyslexia education program; and developing a pilot program to initiate the implementation of the task force's recommendations in an appropriately limited geographical area. In December 2015, the task force submitted a request to the Governor; the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee; and the House Ways and Means Committee for an extension until June 30, 2016, to complete its work and submit its report.

Chapters 234 and 235 of 2016 extended the reporting deadline for the task force to December 30, 2016, and extended the termination date of Chapter 411 of 2015 to June 30, 2017. Chapters 234 and 235 also added to the membership of the task force and added to the task force's mandate by requiring that it (1) make recommendations regarding

how the terms “dyslexia” and “targeted students” should be defined and (2) determine the components and costs of successful dyslexia education programs established in other states.

The bill is consistent with some elements of the task force’s December 2016 [final report](#), including the recommendations to create a pilot program advisory board and to contract with a principal investigator. According to the report, the ultimate goal of the pilot program should be to provide a scalable system of reading instruction within a school building that results in improved reading outcomes for all students, including struggling readers and those identified as having dyslexia through universal screening, utilization of a Structured Literacy approach to reading for all students, flexible homogeneous instructional groupings, and data-driven decisions for instructional programming based upon screening, assessment, and progress monitoring results.

**State Fiscal Effect:** The bill requires the advisory board, in consultation with the principal investigator and the pilot program implementation team, to implement the pilot program for a six-year period. The final report of the Task Force to Study the Implementation of a Dyslexia Education Program calls for a program for students in kindergarten through grade two or three within three schools in each of two local school systems (six schools total).

The report includes estimated costs per school under the proposed pilot program, as shown in **Exhibit 1**, assuming that start-up and some training costs begin in fiscal 2018, with intensive in-school program activities occurring during school years 2018-2019 through 2020-2021. Total program cost estimates per year are also shown in Exhibit 1, assuming implementation of the pilot program in a total of six schools and annual expenditures for a principal investigator, beginning six months into fiscal 2018 and ending after fiscal 2022.

**Exhibit 1**  
**Estimated Pilot Program Costs**

<b><u>Per School Costs</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2018</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2019</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2020</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2021</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2022</u></b>	<b><u>FY 2023</u></b>
Additional Staff Costs	\$0	\$301,800	\$404,800	\$404,800	\$0	\$0
Administrative	87,900	0	0	0	15,000	15,000
Practicum	0	10,600	10,600	10,600	0	0
Summer Institute	0	22,000	22,000	22,000	0	0
Monthly Meetings	0	13,600	14,600	15,600	0	0
Materials	0	2,200	2,200	2,200	0	0
<b>Total Per School</b>	<b>\$87,900</b>	<b>\$350,300</b>	<b>\$454,200</b>	<b>\$455,200</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Six Schools</b>	<b>\$527,200</b>	<b>\$2,101,600</b>	<b>\$2,725,100</b>	<b>\$2,731,000</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>
<b>Principal Investigator</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$62,500</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Program Costs</b>	<b>\$589,700</b>	<b>\$2,226,600</b>	<b>\$2,850,100</b>	<b>\$2,856,000</b>	<b>\$152,500</b>	<b>\$90,000</b>

Source: *Task Force to Study the Implementation of a Dyslexia Education Program Final Report*, December 2016; Department of Legislative Services

The proposed program elements and associated costs are described in detail in the task force’s final report. Costs per school, in addition to \$2,200 annually for program materials in fiscal years 2019 to 2021, are based on the following assumptions:

- **Additional Staff:** The task force assumes the following staffing needs per school for the pilot program: five classroom teachers, one special education teacher and/or instructional resource teacher, one speech pathologist, one teacher for students whose primary language is not English, three para-educators, and one coach per grade in the first year. The estimated costs are in addition to current costs per school.
- **Administrative:** The cost of \$87,900 per school in fiscal 2018 reflects teacher training, parent training, and start-up costs for the program. In fiscal years 2022 and 2023, the cost of \$15,000 per school is intended to cover data collection and reporting requirements.
- **Practicum:** Teachers will be paid to engage in supervised practice teaching (one-on-one or in groups) for students who struggle with reading, either after school or during summer school.

- **Summer Institute:** Prior to each of three successive school years, there will be a two-week (45-hour) training course for teachers (including special educators), teacher mentors, speech language pathologists, and administrators. The course will provide instruction in structured literacy elements and principles, administration and interpretation of screening, and informal diagnostic data. Costs include that of a trainer, and teaching materials and per diem pay for participants.
- **Monthly Meetings:** These costs relate to monthly two-hour in-service meetings during the school year.

However, to the extent that federal funding can be garnered to support the pilot program, the general fund is relieved of some or all of these costs. The task force report lists a number of potential federal grant funding sources, including Individuals with Disabilities Education Act grants and grants through Title I and Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (as reauthorized by the Every Student Succeeds Act). The Department of Legislative Services notes that local funding may also be provided to support a portion of the pilot program's costs.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

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

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - March 9, 2017  
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