

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 1601

(Delegate Wilkins)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

State Department of Education - Guidelines on Trauma-Informed Approach

This bill requires the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), in consultation with the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) and Department of Human Services (DHS), to develop and distribute guidelines on a trauma-informed approach that will assist public schools with the identification of a student, teacher, or staff member who has experienced trauma; the appropriate response to trauma; and becoming a trauma-informed school. MSDE must publish the guidelines on its website. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2018.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: MSDE can develop the required guidelines, distribute them, and post them on its website using existing resources.

Local Effect: None. Local school systems are not required to implement the guidelines. It is assumed that any costs for a local school system that *adopts* the guidelines will be minimal and absorbable within the local school system's budget.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: "Trauma-informed approach" means a method for understanding and responding to an individual with symptoms of chronic interpersonal trauma or traumatic stress. "Trauma-informed school" means a school that (1) acknowledges the widespread impact of trauma and understands the potential paths for recovery; (2) recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma; (3) integrates information about trauma into policies, procedures,

and practices; and (4) actively resists re-traumatizing a student, teacher, or staff member who has experienced trauma.

Current Law: With the assistance of the local health department, each local board of education must provide adequate school health services, instruction in health education, and a healthful school environment. MSDE and MDH must jointly develop public standards and guidelines for school health programs and offer assistance to the local boards of education and local health departments in their implementation. A local board of education must provide a continuum model of prevention and intervention activities and programs that encourage and promote positive behavior and reduce disruption.

Background: According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives. SAMHSA, which funds the National Center for Trauma-Informed Care, indicates that trauma-informed organizations, programs, and services are based on an understanding of the vulnerabilities or triggers of trauma survivors so as to be more supportive and avoid re-traumatization. The bill's definition of a trauma-informed school closely resembles the SAMHSA concept of a trauma-informed program, organization, or system.

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education awarded \$2.3 million in Promoting Student Resilience grants to Baltimore City Public Schools. The grants are intended to support system-wide approaches that link schools, mental health service providers, and community-based organizations to address the educational and mental health needs of students who have experienced significant trauma related to the civil unrest in their communities.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City; Montgomery and Prince George's counties; Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Health; Department of Human Services; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; U.S. Department of Education; *Baltimore Sun*; Department of Legislative Services

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